JULY 1959

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

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**Is Keynesian Economics Outdated?** *Robert Lekachman*

The theories of John Maynard Keynes are no longer adequate, a regular contributor argues, to explain major economic developments in America today: the falling rate of industrial growth, the recent inflation, and the concentration of economic power. A new theory is needed, appropriate to our new economic problems.

**A "Wren" in Palestine** *Ann Roelofs*

The memoir of an English girl who found in the Jewish community of Palestine, where she served during World War II as a member of the Women's Royal Naval Service, a vantage point from which to view the values of her English conservative background.

**Jewish Existence and the Living God** *Emil L. Fackenheim*

Is Jewishness, and the unique, millennia-long survival of the Jews, a matter of religion? Professor Fackenheim inquires whether the Jew can share the religious commitment of his ancestors and what meaning that faith can have in an age of religious doubt.

**Utopianism and Politics** *J. L. Talmon*

A discourse on utopian and revolutionary movements in modern history, and a defense of enlightened circumspection in politics, by a distinguished professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the author of *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*.

**Jews Along the James** *Silvia Tennenbaum*

A rabbi's wife reports on Lynchburg, Virginia and its Jewish community, and evokes the muted tones of Jewish life in a Southern town.

**Tourists in Muscovy** *Alexander Dallin*

How much can we learn about the Soviet Union from visitors to that country? Examining a half dozen recent books by American travelers, Professor Dallin evaluates the shift in our image of Russia which the tourist literature has brought about.

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

# COMMENTARY

**Iraq and the Changing Middle East** *Ray Alan*
*Johann Caspar*

In separate articles, two expert observers of the Middle East describe the continuing revolutionary turmoil in Iraq and its impact throughout the Arab world. Mr. Alan, a regular contributor, analyzes the complicated diplomatic maneuvers and shifts which Communist activity in Iraq has set off. Mr. Caspar, whose "Conversations in Jordan" appeared in our July issue, provides an on-the-spot report from Baghdad.

**By Love Redeemed** *Hans Meyerhoff*

Drawing on their own statements, Mr. Meyerhoff's satire records the message, tone, and accents of the practitioners of modern psychoanalyzing religion.

**Tenth Year in Northrup** *Evelyn N. Rossman*

The fourth article in the writer's series on Jewish life in a New England suburb describes the balance which Northrup's Jews have achieved between the practice of their faith and the demands of the surrounding community. (The author's name and the town's are both pseudonyms.)

**The Future of the Cold War** *George Lichtheim*

A re-assessment of the world situation in the light of recent literature on foreign policy, including Reinhold Niebuhr's new book, *The Structure of Nations and Empires.*

**A Stranger in New York** *Gerald Weales*

A new guidebook to the nation's greatest city, *New York, Places & Pleasures,* by Kate Simon, gives one of our familiar contributors a chance to enlarge from his personal experiences on the discussion of the city's cultural and ethnic variety.

**Dentist** *Albert Halper*

The story of a dentist for whom conversation was the breath of life, by the author of *Union Square.*

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# COMMENTARY

**The Eisenhower-Khrushchev Encounter** *G. F. Hudson*

What world issues are susceptible to negotiation between the United States and the Soviet Union—and which ones are not? On the occasion of the first visit to America by a Russian head of state, a distinguished authority on international relations weighs the problems facing the President vis-à-vis the Soviet Premier.

**The Yom Kippur Liturgy** *David Baumgardt*

A philosopher expounds the prayers traditional in the synagogue on the Day of Atonement, and discusses their meaning for American Jews of the present day.

**Liberal Prospects for 1960** *William V. Shannon*

Attempting to gauge the political mood of the country, an experienced Washington correspondent inspects the record of the recent Congressional session, and describes the strategies of the leading contenders for next year's Presidential nominations.

**The Dangers of Literacy** *David Daiches*

The charge that democracy has impaired the quality of conversation, education, and culture generally, has been made by Jacques Barzun in his recent book *The House of Intellect.* From England, a noted critic voices his disagreement.

**The Future of the Kibbutz** *Gerda L. Cohen*

Have Israel's collective communities "found the good life, only to lose their own soul"? A veteran observer of the Israeli scene reports on the present state of the *kibbutzim,* and the controversies over their future.

**Social Revolution in Cuba** *Harold Lavine*

Fidel Castro's revolution released social forces which are now, in turn, threatening the very groups that first brought him to power. Mr. Lavine, an editor of *Newsweek,* has twice recently visited the island.

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# COMMENTARY

**Is the Cold War Finished?** *Hans J. Morgenthau*

Does the apparently optimistic conclusion of the Eisenhower-Khrushchev talks portend a genuine relaxation of world tensions? An experienced observer of U.S. foreign policy, and former State Department adviser, estimates the new situation.

**Labor and the Negro** *Herbert Hill*

The labor secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People presents the long history of anti-Negro discrimination in the trade union movement, from the days of Samuel Gompers down to the present.

**American and European Intellectuals** *Francis Golffing*

A poet and literary critic compares the different modes of thought and belief of American and European intellectuals, differences which account for much misunderstanding in the perennial trans-Atlantic dialogue.

**The Satmar Movement** *Harry Gersh & Sam Miller*

A group of East European refugees have re-created their own *shtetl* in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, and now plan a self-contained colony in rural New Jersey. Two reporters describe their Orthodox way of life, together with their energetic opposition to the State of Israel.

**Israel and Afro-Asia** *Edwin Samuel*

Despite the hostility of the Arab bloc, Israel has established extensive economic, technical, and cultural relations with a host of Afro-Asian states from Ghana to Burma. A British-born Israeli authority tells how these are working out.

**The Myth of "Suburbia"** *Bennett M. Berger*

There are suburbs and suburbs, says an Illinois sociologist, and there is little that is fundamentally new in any of them — certainly not a whole "new way of life." Professor Berger explains how the myth of a "cultural revolution" in the suburbs reflects our changing notions of social class.

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# COMMENTARY

**Politics in Israel** *A. V. Sherman*

An observer of the Israeli scene evaluates the outcome of the State's first election since the Suez-Sinai crisis, and explains how the campaign issues and the party system have reflected deeper, as yet unsolved, social problems.

**Decline and Fall of the Klan** *Wilma Dykeman & James Stokeley*

The "invisible empire" of the Klan has been visibly declining, but it is still capable of doing considerable mischief in the South's continuing desegregation crisis. By the authors of *Neither Black nor White.*

**The Struggle Over the Fifth Republic** *Ray Alan*

The character and direction of de Gaulle's France, and the fate of Algeria, remain very much in doubt. A regular contributor describes, among other things, the recent upsurge of plotting and counterplotting, with politicians accusing one another of violence, and even attempts at murder.

**Bucks County, Pennsylvania** *Josephine Herbst*

When writers and artists first began to seek out Bucks County as a place to live, its fine old stone houses, innocent of all plumbing, cost something like $4,000. Now they are nearer to $79,000. A description of the changing American scene by a veteran writer.

**Social Science Views the Loyalty Probes** *Alan F. Westin*

Now that political agitation over loyalty and security has abated, historians, sociologists, and psychologists are reexamining the 1947-1955 controversies over those issues—and coming to different conclusions. A Columbia professor of law reviews the recent literature.

**The Groom on Zlota Street** *Hugh H. Nissenson*

A story that re-creates the repressed terrors of the Polish *shtetl.* The young writer is a newcomer to the pages of COMMENTARY.

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

# COMMENTARY

**The Concealments of Marcel** *Maurice Samuel*

An authoritative examination of the theme of Jewishness in Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Mr. Samuel locates Proust the author behind the fictional narrator, "Marcel," characterizes his feelings toward Jews and Judaism, examines the views of some recent biographers, and compares Proust's attitudes with those of James Joyce in *Ulysses* and of Boris Pasternak in *Dr. Zhivago*. A major essay by the author of *The World of Sholom Aleichem*.

**Democracy and Revolution** *Oscar Gass*

Since the war there has been a tendency to associate the Russian Bolsheviks with the French Jacobins (and with the French Revolution as a whole) in a general condemnation of revolution and "totalitarian democracy." A critique of the "counter-revolutionary" position, and especially of the current adulation of Edmund Burke. The first of several articles.

**Our New Elite Colleges** *Lawrence Bloomgarden*

In the last decade, some two dozen well-endowed American private colleges, long considered socially prestigious, have significantly raised their academic standards for admission—and curtailed discrimination against Jews and others. This has made them elite colleges educationally as well as socially. A long-time student of the subject considers the consequences for a democratic society.

**From Petain to de Gaulle** *Max Beloff*

France's deep divisions during World War II continue to stir debate, and influence the politics of that country today. An Oxford historian analyzes some recent books on the Vichy regime and the Free French movement.

**The Life and Time of Norman Mailer** *F. W. Dupee*

The novelist's new book, *Advertisements for Myself*, is a miscellany of his fiction, verse, and social comment over two decades—tied together by a revealing autobiography. A critic utilizes the occasion to review Mailer's entire career.

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# COMMENTARY

## ZION REVISITED

### *The Anomaly of Jewishness Remains*

DAN JACOBSON

IT IS the things you don't remember, that you couldn't possibly remember, that come back with the most overwhelming sense of familiarity: you see them, you smell them, you taste them, and they are intimate and altogether familiar, as if you had seen or smelled or tasted them just the day before. And it is only your own wonder as to why you should notice them when they are so familiar—only this wonder that tells you how unfamiliar the scents and the sights really are, how long a time has passed since you were last among them. Outside the Lydda airport terminal building, the smell of the air of Israel was at once in my nostrils, and though I had not known before that I knew the smell, I recognized immediately what it was. There was the sea in it, and sand, and orange blossom—but one can no more describe a smell than one can remember it, until one smells it again. And as with smells, so too with tastes, and the sight of such things as the illuminated black and yellow boxes advertising Nesher beer, the white enamel plates with black lettering that doctors use to announce their specialties, the names of cigarettes, the sand that sifts through the cracks in the pavements of Tel Aviv. These and a hundred other things which I had forgotten were the most sharply familiar of all; the things I thought I had remembered, I found most changed. The mind distorts what it consciously remembers, keeps intact what it imagines it has forgotten.

DAN JACOBSON, who was born in South Africa but now makes his home in England, was introduced to American readers in his first article in COMMENTARY, May 1953. Since then he has been a regular contributor of critical essays and short stories, including two that had to do with Israel: "The Promised Land" (October 1957) and "A Family Man" (December 1953). Mr. Jacobson's three published novels are *The Trap, A Dance in the Sun,* and *The Price of Diamonds. The Zulu and the Zeide,* a recent collection of his short stories (including some that had appeared in COMMENTARY) was reviewed in our last month's number.

### I

LET me say at once that I find it extraordinarily difficult to write coherently about Israel. Ten years ago it was, in a way, easier for me to deal with my own experiences there. I had come to Israel with half a mind to settle, deliberately seeking an involvement with the country. But on the present visit, made ten years after the first, and very brief and unexpected in itself, I had no intention at all of settling in the country: I went there simply as a tourist, leaving behind my career and my family in the country in which I lived. I was merely going on holiday: after an English winter I looked forward to being in the sun, to eating oranges, to hearing a strange language in my ears and looking at places which I could not expect soon to look at again.



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I was in the sun, I did find myself in places which now seem remote to me. But I was not like a tourist in any other country, and I know that in Israel I never can be; it dismayed and disturbed me to find that I did immediately feel deeply involved in the country, and still do; to have to admit too that on my return to the country which I think of as "mine" and the life which is certainly "mine" I feel a deep discontent and impatience, even a resentment, that it should be as it is, and not otherwise. But how other would I wish it? I do not know. Certainly when I was in Israel I was thankful that I was no more than a visitor to the country, and that I would soon be going from it back to England.

There are many good reasons why someone from England or America can feel glad that he is not an Israeli. Israel is a country that has been made out of pain and unhappiness and suffering; it is a country where the parents and brothers and sisters and children of almost every other person one meets have been killed by bullet and gas and torture; and being there, one cannot but be oppressed by the knowledge of what this has meant, and still means to the people in it. Then, Israel is a bitterly poor country—how poor I had not realized until the present visit; last time I was there I had been too preoccupied with personal decisions and indecisions really to look at what the country in itself offered as a place of habitation. This time I saw more; and what I saw was disheartening. The country is pitifully endowed: its farmlands are tiny, its industries are largely artificial, its hopes of earning a Western standard of living for itself remote. And much of Israel is very ugly—not the country itself, which is harshly and poignantly beautiful—but the towns and the villages which have been built on it. Heaven knows one doesn't have to go far in England to find ugliness caked and irremovable upon the ground, roofs like scabs, streets like jaws, acres upon acres, suburbs upon suburbs of such ugliness. Yet there are great parts of London, for example, which are beautiful to see, and even what is immediately ugly in London can be transformed by its relation to the great patterns of the city. There is no city, no town, no village in Israel about which this can be said, with the exception perhaps of Jerusalem, perhaps of Haifa. Everywhere else what one sees in the towns is shallow, disordered, scratched up, knocked down, cheap, fragmentary; and this ugliness is curiously exhausting and dispiriting, not only because there is so little relief from it, but because one feels it to reflect again the poverty and unhappiness from which it has arisen.

Now I know it will immediately be said: for heaven's sake, what else could you expect? The country *is* poor, the people in it *have* suffered, beauty cannot be catered to when the population of the country has tripled itself in ten years. All of which is true; and nothing I have said affects my admiration for what the Israelis have done in the last ten years, both in relation to the enormity of the tasks thrust on them, and in relation to what they were at the beginning of that time. And this is true of every sphere of Israeli life: true of the houses they have managed to build, of the people they have managed to train, of the roads they have constructed, the wars they have fought; true of their attitudes toward one another and toward the state they live in; true too of the attitude of the state toward them. The wonder is not merely that in spite of the population's having tripled within the last ten years living conditions are now so much more comfortable than they were; nor merely that in spite of the unabated hostility of the Arab world there is much greater confidence than ever before that Israel will survive, and survive in strength; nor merely that the Israelis themselves are convinced (and they should know) that their life has been getting steadily better and better, and will continue to do so; nor merely that, as a result of the greater physical comfort and greater security, the manners of the people have so much improved, have become so much more relaxed and casual that it is comparatively (though not absolutely) pleasur-

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able to drive in a car down Allenby Street—the wonder is something of which these are all parts, and yet that is greater than any single one of them. It is the sense one has of a constant and unending struggle in Israel to keep up standards, and even more, to find out what the best standards for the country really are: this seems to me the biggest achievement of all in Israel, and one without which none of the other achievements would have been attainable.

It is this, indeed, which makes me feel that no service is done to Israel for one to say, for example, that what is ugly is not ugly. If the Israelis are battling so hard for standards, it seems to me pointless and ungracious for people who visit the country to patronize it by dropping their standards as soon as they set foot on its soil. True, by English or American standards, the Israeli standard of public architecture and public manners, of food and mutual concern, might generally be low; but the Israelis have not forgotten that there are standards, and they are trying fitfully, erratically, wrongheadedly often, but always determinedly, to find out what these standards are: the standards for *them,* living in that country, with that past, that problematical future, these traditions, these hopes. The fact that they often fail to achieve their standards, or fall into sheer confusion, is unimportant compared with the fact that they try for them; ten years ago one could do no more than hope that this might happen, one could not really expect it.

For this achievement it can be said paradoxically that the Arabs deserve something of the credit. The fact that Israel has been under constant threat (indeed under constant attack) since the inception of the state has—quite apart from the physical suffering, the brutal, recurring loss of life that it has caused—depleted the country economically to a degree that can hardly be measured; that can merely be guessed at by seeing the prominence everywhere in Israel of the army and its institutions. But on quite another level there is no doubt that the sense of constant threat has strengthened the Israeli sense of community, the sense of responsibility the Israelis feel toward one another and to the country; they know they need one another, and they know now that they can rely on one another. And this feeling remains powerful and coherent in spite of the fact that the problem of sheer survival is one that does not seem much to trouble the Israelis any longer. Indeed, one can say that the Israeli sense of community has become stronger because the outlook no longer appears so dangerous: their reliance on one another has found here its justification and reward. All this is quite apart from the role of the army as an educative influence in the life of the country. The army has taken in thousands of young immigrants, and taught them not just how to be soldiers, but how to be Israelis: taught them Hebrew, taught them trades, taught them what it is to be answerable to the community for their own actions.

Discussing the role of the army in Israeli life is as good a point as any to illustrate what I meant by saying that in Israel the attempt to maintain standards is simultaneously a search for what are or could be the most suitable standards. Before returning to Israel, I had wondered about Israeli "militarism," which is something we hear a great deal about: the general idea people have of Israel nowadays is that it is a kind of Sparta, where even the girls carry guns. (Especially the girls carry guns, according to the illustrated papers.) And I was prepared to dislike Israeli militarism as much as I dislike any other, when it grows too big for its boots. In fact, and inevitably, as I see it now, I saw no signs of such a militarism: being in Israel one soon realizes that there is no room for the traditional and dangerous kind of militarism to grow. The Israelis are too democratic, too talkative, too untidy, too interfering, too independent, for the army or the officers' corps to take to itself powers to which it is not entitled, even if it wanted to—which it obviously does not. There is very little spit and polish in the Israeli army, there are no socially elite regi-

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ments (the idea is unthinkable in the context of Israeli life); those officers who are politically ambitious have to shed their uniforms and go meekly into private life before they are able to realize their ambitions. But if anything Junker-like or junta-like is unimaginable in Israeli terms, there remains the need for an ethos which can be transformed into a military quality should an emergency arise: if the Israelis don't admire the military mind and the military man, what do they admire? The answer is a curious one; and it typifies exactly what I mean by the Israeli need for their own standards of judgment and value. The "military" qualities which the Israelis seem to have decided upon as most worth admiration are those of physical hardihood and physical daredevilry —precisely those qualities which the country's army most needs, and precisely those which are least dependent on the old kind of militarism. Of this daredevilry the suicidal marches to Petra, in Jordan, are the most dramatic examples; but there are others, less dramatic, but not less significant overall. Anyone can join in the annual march to Jerusalem (this year some twelve and a half thousand people were involved in it); any boy can try to join the paratroopers; anyone can go for a hike in the Negev along trails that only he knows about (the army was called out three times in the couple of weeks I was in Israel to find lost groups of hikers); and those who spoke admiringly of the former Chief of Staff referred first and immediately to his personal bravery, as though that were the quality above all others which most fitted him for his task. So, out of the need of the country, and their own deepest inclination of spirit, they have made a value, their own kind of value. And what is true here is true of other areas of Israeli life; true even of those where the issues are much less clear-cut, the needs more various, the inclinations more devious.

That there is a "crisis of values" in Israel is a commonplace. It can be described very crudely as a conflict between the collective and pioneering values of the past, and the personal and comfort-seeking values which dominate most other Western societies, and which are beginning to be dominant now in Israel too. To my mind, the "crisis" is going to persist indefinitely; it seems to me a healthy and inevitable development that young Israelis should find themselves wanting to live private lives, and to pursue their own concerns rather than the concerns of the community or the state. But it also seems to me beyond question that the pioneering, democratic, and collective values of the early days will continue to exert a powerful influence on the thinking and feeling of most Israelis, and on their style of life. Again, the Israelis are being forced to find their own distinctive modes of valuation: the point is that the search goes on.

## II

Jews have always been in the very center of the social and cultural and religious history of Western civilization. And somehow people had imagined that though the Jews were "normalizing" themselves in Palestine, they wouldn't normalize themselves to the degree where this knack or fate of theirs would disappear. On the contrary, Jewish and Gentile Zionists alike prophesied immense cultural and spiritual and religious contributions to be made to the world by a restored Jewish state. "And out of Jerusalem will go forth the law"—surely, people believed, that would be true of a restored Jerusalem. And the kind of experiment in collective living made by the kibbutzim confirmed everyone in that belief—until now. Now the kibbutzim play a smaller role in the life of Israel than they ever did; and Israel plays a tinier role in the world's intellectual life than anyone could ever have expected. There they are, these Jews in Israel, trying to make a living in a very poor country, speaking a language that no one else on earth speaks or wants to speak, thousands of miles away from the Europe that gave the country its birth, isolated from the countries around them, populated by immense numbers of non-European Jews—whatever kind of country people expected Israel to be, it wasn't this. It wasn't a country

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where some writers write in English rather than in Hebrew, so that their work will reach the audience they want it to reach; where painters take their paintings to Paris and London and New York to get the kind of appreciation and monetary reward they need; where students at the Hebrew University have to learn English in order to pursue their studies; where conditions, in a word, are those of cultural and intellectual provincialism or colonialism.

Now some Israelis who care about these things react in the way of chauvinism: they deny that the problem exists at all; they make exaggerated claims for Israeli poetry, architecture, intellectual achievements generally. But these people do not deal with the problem: they merely aggravate it. Fortunately there are others, many others, who are honestly bewildered and surprised and taken aback to find themselves living in what they recognize to be the provinces, and are wondering what can be done about it. Because they too had within themselves the conviction that Jewishness is centrality; now they are finding that Israeliness is not.

I had imagined that the decision of the overwhelming majority of the Anglo-Saxon Jews to remain where they were must have come as a great moral shock to the Israelis—a moral shock not in any way diminished by the fact that the Israelis know how much they are dependent economically and politically on the continued existence of Jewish communities outside Israel. But I found that whatever the more ardent among them might have been saying a few years ago, many Israelis now neither expect nor even want the Jews of the English-speaking world to come to Israel. They are positively glad that these communities outside are there, for to the Israelis the Jews of the English-speaking world are a lifeline, a passageway into the great world—the world which the Israelis, being Jews, are intensely reluctant to abandon. Israel is a small Middle Eastern country; but the Israelis want a stall in the world's great marketplace of ideas, and they know that at present they are most likely to get one through their connection with the Jewries of the United States and England.

It is this which is taking the edge off their resentment: it is this too which offers to Jews outside Israel something more to do than raising funds. Fund-raising and fund-giving will have to be continued indefinitely, and for myself I cannot feel the contempt for the raisers and givers that is fashionable among some members of the Jewish intelligentsia: the bread of too many people depends on all this. But if money were all Israel wanted of the Jews who live in freedom and peace outside it, then the relationship would ultimately be a boring and enfeebling one on both sides. But Israel wants more, needs more: Israel wants immigrants, certainly, but she wants visitors too; Israel wants communication, dialogue, debate; Israel wants interest, concern, criticism; Israel wants to remain Jewish.

And what of our needs? No one can look ahead nowadays further than about a generation; for that period of time we can see that the various Jewish communities scattered over the free world are going to continue as recognizable Jewish communities. Now this generation is our generation, is us: we have to deal now with our involvements and responsibilities and hopes for ourselves. And who can deny that Israel is among our hopes? Already there is so much we have gained from the existence of Israel: we are unquestionably better off in every sense than we would have been had there not been two million Jews living in a country of their own; and if a catastrophe were to overwhelm Israel, a moral catastrophe would happen to us. (And very possibly it would be followed by a catastrophe of another kind.) And even if Israel were to survive as no more than a second-rate Levantine state, we would be the poorer for it, emotionally and morally. Whereas an Israel peaceful and reasonably prosperous and open to us can give us a particular kind of pride, and a particular sense of release. There were people not so long ago who were making it their business to kill every one of us that they could lay their hands on; but they didn't

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destroy everything, they didn't kill everyone; and Israel, as it is today, is even in its very failures a testimony to the will not merely to survival, but to survival on terms laid down by the victims, by those who were once helpless but are helpless no longer. If there was nothing but luck between any of us and Auschwitz, there is a bond of another kind between us and Tel Aviv. Historical bonds are easily forgotten; but this one is not historical: it lives. That is the bond.

## III

I UNDERSTAND better now what it was that made me feel discontented and impatient on my return to England. What the Zionists have been promising us for so long is that once there was a Jewish state, the Jews within the state would become like any other people; the Jews outside would become, say, like the Irish or the Greeks in America; all that was anomalous and without parallel in Jewish existence would be done away with. And in some way or another I must have believed that this had happened, or could happen, now that Israel had come into existence. But, being forced to consider the dependence of Israel on the Diaspora, and the involvement of the Diaspora with Israel, I realize that what the Zionists promised us hasn't happened, and isn't going to happen. There is no country in the world like Israel; and there are no people in the world who have a relation to any country like the relation which the Jews of the Diaspora have to Israel. What Israel has done, in fact, is to give another aspect to Jewish singularity—a new and very welcome aspect. But the singularity, the oddity, the anomaly of Jewishness remains as singular and odd and anomalous as it has ever been. (And by definition it remains that for the Jews of Israel too, no matter how much "Jewishness" they are able to take for granted in their lives. Even the bare-armed and suntanned young men in the streets of Israel, with their confident, guttural voices, their cropped hair and fierce mustaches—they too had their secret place of bewilderment, their own puzzlement at what history had made of them; they too knew and did not know what it is to be a Jew.) All the grammar books tell us that there are no degrees of uniqueness, that a thing is either unique or it is not; yet I cannot help feeling that the State of Israel has managed to make more emphatic, not less so, Jewish uniqueness.

Our uniqueness is such a burden, such a mystery, to those of us without religious belief, who yet, in a way we cannot understand, continue to be Jews. And to come to Israel and to realize that not even in Israel or about Israel can the burden be laid down, is at first and inevitably dispiriting, disappointing. Was it for this that people toiled, and fought, and died of malaria, were hanged by the British, blown to bits by the Arabs—that we should still be different, and restless within our differentness?

Probably they did hope for more. Nevertheless, they have given us all it was in their power to give.

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# THE TRUTH ABOUT HITLER'S "COMMISSAR ORDER"

## *The Guilt of the German Generals*

GERALD REITLINGER

ON FEBRUARY 6, 1959, two former SS guards from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp were sentenced to life imprisonment by a German court in Bonn. Outside Germany this belated war-crimes trial excited only the barest interest; it was no novelty in the postwar world for the murder of prisoners of war in 1941 to be the subject of a judicial verdict pronounced more than seventeen years later. The two SS men had been repatriated to West Germany with other war criminals by the Soviet government in 1956, on the condition that they would continue to serve their sentences. The Bonn Ministry of Justice had ordered a retrial to satisfy the public conscience: it had been asserted that duress alone could have procured the monotonous replies of *"Jawohl"* which followed every one of the public prosecutor's inconceivable charges at the huge open trial held by the Russians in East Berlin in 1947.

Surprisingly, nearly all the implausible admissions made at this trial were repeated at Bonn twelve years later. The defendants, Gustav Sorge and Wilhelm Schubert, made no attempt to deny that they had taken part in the slow and systematic murder, night after night, for six weeks, of 10,800 mainly invalid Russian prisoners of war—murders for which they had questioned neither the motive nor the necessity.[1]

After a trial lasting nearly four months the German conscience was assuaged. The Federal Republic had demonstrated that it would not accept the plea of "duty" to excuse the atrocities of the former SS. But there was something else that the trial did not show and was not intended to show. The real murderers of hundreds of thousands of helpless prisoners of war had not been crass, dull-witted NCO's from the *Totenkopfverbaende* of the SS, but the hereditary officer caste of Germany, the High Command of Hitler's Wehrmacht. It was they who, in 1941, rejected the responsibility they bore for the lives of men who had surrendered honorably on the field of battle. The German officer corps had done so according to a protocol for which no precedent exists in the entire history of war, and they had rejoiced that the guilt would fall on the men of the SS, who were not soldiers at all according to their definition.

In 1959 it suited no government west of the Iron Curtain to be reminded of these phantoms, nor was the connection apparent between the gruesome confessions of the SS men Sorge and Schubert, and Hitler's famous "Commissar Order," which had been the subject of protracted argument both at the International Nuremberg trial of 1945-46 and at the High Command trial of 1948. In 1959 the evidence, so terrible at the time, had been forgotten. It had moreover been ambiguous. The evidence had shown that Hitler's order for the summary execution of captured Russian political functionaries had been circulated to 340 commands; yet there had been doubts about its application. Some divisional corps commanders and possibly one or two army commanders had neglected to pass the order on. It had been suggested that fake executions had been reported in order to silence criticism at Hitler's headquarters. A few military memoirists had subsequently mentioned real executions and even Wehrmacht collaboration, but all the witnesses seemed to agree that the Commissar Order had died a natural death within a few months of the invasion of Russia, and that the Nuremberg prosecution had exaggerated its importance. What was the shooting of a few hundred or even a thousand alleged political commissars, when the German Prisoner of War Office admitted

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that four million out of five million Russian prisoners had died or disappeared by May 1944? And what was it, compared with the one million German prisoners who were estimated to have died in Russia?

When, however, the estimate of General Reinecke's Prisoner of War Office is examined,[2] it will be found that in May 1944, 473,000 Russian prisoners were entered as *exterminated*. Were all these men political commissars? The fact was that the executions in the field were the least part of the workings of Hitler's order, which had entitled the execution teams of the SS to screen all prisoner-of-war camps and cages, to remove whomever they pleased, and to execute them where and when they chose. The order had involved not only suspected *politruks* (army political commissars), but prisoners who for any reason whatever were a nuisance to their captors and guards, prisoners who were not considered worth feeding, such as Jewish soldiers. and soldiers who were desperately wounded or seriously ill. This had happened because the same field commanders who thought that they had done the decent thing in not themselves executing *politruks*, passed on millions of prisoners from the combat zone to the rear. Under the rule of OKW, the High Command of the Wehrmacht, the execution teams of the SS functioned in the rear zone with very little obstruction from the military. Thus the martyrs of Sachsenhausen and other concentration camps had been handed over to these institutions with the full connivance of the military staffs in each German *Wehrkreis*.

Apart from the failure of the Nuremberg war trials to present any clear picture of this monstrous thing, the subject was regarded in Western countries as so unclean as to be best forgotten—with this result: in February 1959, when the German public was still being reminded most embarrassingly of its Schuberts and Sorges, a British Prime Minister went to Moscow apparently hoping to persuade the Russians that the West German *Bundeswehr* must have its atomic weapons and Herr Krupp his nuclear reactor. Even that was not the most fatuous of the incomprehensions of the West in the years of the cold war. Would there have been a *Bundeswehr* at all, or a Bonn constitution either, if, for instance, 10,800 sick and wounded British soldiers from Dunkirk had been done away with in Sachsenhausen, if 80 per cent of all British and American prisoners held by Germany had been found in May 1945 to have died of hunger, typhus, and plain extermination? In the light of postwar history, Hitler seems to have possessed an uncanny sense of when to observe the traditional usages of war and when to ignore them. Malmédy and le Paradis were mistakes, made by subordinates. It was never intended that British and American soldiers should be treated in such a way that they might find common cause with the *Untermenschen* from the East.

We now know, as a result of the war trials, that Hitler planned the extermination of Russian prisoners of war at least as early as March 1941. One of the ways by which he obtained the acquiescence of subordinates was to point out the failure of Stalin in 1929 to subscribe to the Geneva agreement for the protection of prisoners of war by neutral powers. Hitler argued in March 1941, three months before the invasion—and he repeated his argument in September—that the Russians clearly meant to do away with their prisoners. He brought up alleged cases from the Finland war in 1939.[3] Among the rank and file, used to party indoctrination, this argument worked even better than among the generals. It was easy to convince Sorge and Schubert, murdering night after night for an extra ration of fried potatoes and beer, that German prisoners in Russia would never return either.

It is extremely probable that an agreement on the rights of prisoners of war could have been reached in the beginning, had Hitler wanted it. The Russians had not renounced the Hague convention of 1907 and their objection to the Geneva agreement of 1929 with its notion of "protecting powers" had been nothing more than a typical post-revolution dread of foreign interference. But once Hitler had shown his hand regarding the Russian prisoners, Stalin could hardly be expected not to follow. There was no Russian order for the execution of captured Nazi party members, but after Stalingrad, when for the first time Germans fell into Russian hands in large numbers, there was no objection to letting them die as the Russian prisoners had died.

The conception that war against an ideology differs from normal warfare, and is not

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subject to normal restraints, was by no means new in 1941. The religious wars of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance offered a precedent, while the belief that followers of certain political ideas were too vicious to be treated as human beings was at least as old as the French Revolution. That somewhat inflated apostle of liberty, Edmund Burke, had written in 1791: "If ever a foreign prince enters into France, he must enter it as a country of assassins. The mode of civilized war will not be practiced; nor are the French who act on the present system, entitled to expect it."[4]

This sounds much like Hitler's reported language in 1941. But in 1791 these threats were public, and had the effect of strengthening the determination of the French revolutionaries, so that, when there was a short-lived occupation of a portion of French soil, the occupying power was too fearful to behave with anything but restraint. With Hitler it was otherwise. His plans were made in secret, and it only became apparent after the invasion had begun that "the mode of civilized warfare" would not be practiced.

It was not at all clear what Hitler expected to gain from such a method of waging war, for oddly enough, he never at any time envisaged a permanent occupation of the main territory of Russia. The murder of the Russian officers, party leaders, and state employees was to be a political preparation for future Russian secessionist states.

On this subject, Hitler was deliberately vague. On March 13, 1941, he told Franz Halder, his chief of staff, that these states would have to remain socialist because that was the only way of life the Russians understood, but it must be socialism with "limited intelligence."[5] Before any handpicked leaders could be found for these states, all traces of Bolshevism must disappear. It might become necessary to send police units of the SS to the front line itself, so that Hitler could prepare the new political system. This was to proceed not simply by political purges but by the "extermination of entire grades of society."

In his first public declaration of his plan, on March 30, 1941, Hitler did not make it clear whether he intended to murder all Red Army officers and all state employees, or whether he merely intended to weed out inveterate militant Communists. On July 16, however, when the Commissar Order had been in force for nearly four weeks, following the invasion of Russia on June 22, 1941, Hitler produced before a small, select audience a very different theory concerning "political preparations." The socialist secessionist states had dropped out. "Every successor of the Fuehrer should know that security for the Reich exists only if there are no foreign military forces west of the Urals." Though "we ourselves must know clearly that we shall never leave these countries," the fact must not be advertised to the world. Commanders and officials must act as though they had a temporary mandate simply to preserve order and security. This meant that they could proceed with the "shooting and resettlement" necessary for a final solution, without the nature of that solution becoming apparent to the world. Hitler then went on to enumerate the territories which would be incorporated immediately into Germany, including areas as far afield as the German Volga Republic and the Baku oilfields. For the rest of Russia, there would be something resembling the British occupation of India.[6]

This analogy, which Hitler used more than once at this time, implied among other things that he had abandoned the idea of murdering the entire Russian administrative class and that Russian collaborators would be sought and tolerated, if not precisely welcomed. But the execution of the Commissar Order, which in fact amounted to a license for the wholesale murder of Russian prisoners of war and civilians, remained uninfluenced by Hitler's changing views on Russia's destiny after German victory. The Commissar Order was issued early in June 1941, two weeks before the invasion, and was never repealed; it was still on the statute books in 1944, when Hitler himself endorsed the plan of a Russian liberation army to fight against Stalin.

ORIGINALLY Hitler had intended this program of extermination to be entirely in the hands of the SS, but on March 30, 1941, when he addressed his generals in the Reich Chancellery, he had already changed his mind. In a speech lasting two and a half hours, he explained that the elimination of the present Russian leadership would be as much in the hands of individual military commanders as in the hands of Himmler and his special police units. These measures were not a matter for military courts. The troops would

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be "expected to strike toward the rear with the same methods which they used in attacking an enemy in the field." Commissars and GPU men were "criminals and should be treated as such." If the commanders failed to grasp the fact that this was a war of extermination, they would have to fight the same enemy thirty years hence. The commanders must therefore forget the code of military honor and make up their minds to the sacrifice of their scruples. At this point Franz Halder's diary breaks off with the significant entry: "Noon—all invited to lunch."[7]

Had the High Command eaten that lunch in the Reich Chancellery on March 30 and then declared that they would not go on with Hitler's plans, there would have been no Commissar Order and probably no invasion of Russia. But that is not a realistic hypothesis. As Alfred Jodl, head of the Operations section of the High Command (OKW), told his German counsel from the Nuremberg witness stand, German officers were not trained for revolution, though he believed that in the year 1848 the Prussian generals had struck the ground with their sabers.[8] But the generals did less than that in March 1941. To a knot of perspiring, overexcited field marshals and generals, Walter von Brauchitsch, the Commander in Chief, declared that it was useless to argue with Hitler, once he had stated his mind in public. But allow him time and trust him, Brauchitsch, to find a way of circumventing the order. That kept them quiet, but Franz Halder proved more difficult. He knew a little more about Hitler's intentions, having been in the secret since March 5. Halder now proposed that both he and Brauchitsch should resign. Brauchitsch refused, because of his responsibilities toward his troops and because he thought that he could still get Keitel, as chief of OKW, to oppose Hitler's plan.[9] Finally, he reminded Halder that the latter had promised at the beginning of the Polish campaign never to leave him in the lurch. That settled the matter. Halder stayed at his post and left it to Brauchitsch to defeat the Commissar Order.

The history of the drafting and circulation of the Commissar Order was that of a long struggle by the generals to save face. Brauchitsch, ostensibly pledged to do what he could to defeat the order, conceived the issue as a question of jurisdiction. The first prerequisite was to secure military control over the special units of Himmler's Security Service. In Poland, where there was a civilian German administration, the Wehrmacht had no authority over these units. In France and Belgium, however, where there was a military government, the powers of the Security Service were severely limited by protocol. In the hope of reaching a similar agreement for Russia, Brauchitsch sent his Quartermaster General, Eduard Wagner, to see the notorious Reinhard Heydrich a few days after March 30.

Heydrich was the head of the Main Security Office (RSHA), a huge overgrown bureaucracy which ran every branch of the Security Service, including the Criminal Police and the Gestapo. Although the RSHA was but one branch of Himmler's SS organization, it was in reality Heydrich's private kingdom. As security chief, Heydrich was more interested in the military intelligence side of his duties than in his better-known role as mass executioner of Jews and political enemies. But his ambitious encroachment into the military sphere had not been easy, and in 1937 Heydrich had been forced to come to terms with Admiral Canaris, the head of the *Abwehr* or Military Intelligence Service. Since these terms, known as the "twelve commandments,"[10] were still in force in March 1941, they could be used as a brake on the proposed activities of Himmler and Heydrich in Russia.

Brauchitsch's spokesman, Wagner, was met by Heinrich Mueller, the chief of the Gestapo. Mueller, the Beria of Hitler's Reich, had none of the attributes of the more remarkable police chiefs of history; he was a dull, overpromoted Bavarian policeman with an admiration for what he conceived to be the Soviet police system. Faithful to Hitler's declared wishes, Mueller tried to reserve for Himmler and Heydrich the control of police measures even up to the front line. Wagner, an impatient man, refused to continue the discussion. It was resumed by Heydrich himself, who brought with him his military intelligence expert, Walter Schellenberg, to make out the draft of an agreement. Heydrich had already admitted to Schellenberg that freedom of action for the Security Service up to the front line was an impossibility.[11] So, in an interview which passed very amicably, Heyd-

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rich surrendered the rights, which Hitler had apparently accorded him, on condition that the High Command fed and billeted his men and equipped them with motor transport. Wagner apparently regarded this as a victory.

Schellenberg's draft of the agreement was circulated by Brauchitsch on April 28, 1941, exactly four weeks after Hitler's lecture in the Reich Chancellery. It had not been discovered at the time of the first Nuremberg trial, but when produced at the High Command trial in 1948, it completely refuted a myth—the myth of the army officers who had been tied hand and foot by an agreement between the High Command and the SS. Under the Heydrich-Wagner agreement, the authority of an army commander in his own area of operations was unimpaired. Any instructions that Heydrich might give his men had to be reported by a representative of his Security Service stationed at army headquarters, and these instructions had to yield precedence to army orders. The same applied to the rear zone which was controlled by an army rear area commander or *Korueck*. Only in the zones administered by German civil government could Heydrich's authority not be contested by the Wehrmacht.

In spite of these restrictions, there were many instances of *Koruecks* who assisted the Security Service in the massacres of the Jewish population, or of army commanders who failed to bring the police squads of the Security Service to heel, or who, like Rundstedt and Reichenau, published orders which forbade their subordinates to interfere. Heydrich knew that he would gain more than he lost by such a generous agreement. He knew that the army commanders would be too busy and too frightened of the Nazi system to concern themselves with his affairs. His strength lay in the section of the agreement which released him from reporting to the Wehrmacht in areas of civil government, for to these areas and to Germany proper the captured enemy must sooner or later be removed. Here he could execute Hitler's Commissar Order without any interference at all.[12]

BRAUCHITSCH and Wagner, however, persisted in acting as if they had won a victory. Following the talks with Heydrich, the first draft of the Commissar Order was circulated by Brauchitsch on May 12, 1941, the final draft on June 8. It was drafted by Walter Warlimont, a party general who had commanded the German volunteers in the Spanish civil war and was now deputy to Alfred Jodl, the head of the Operations Section of the High Command (OKW). In spite of his Nazi reputation, Warlimont tried to evade the assignment and suggested to Wagner that the latter might issue the order orally. Wagner objected that, if Hitler discovered this, he would be quite capable of repudiating all that Wagner had gained from Heydrich. Up to the present, Wagner had stopped the Security Service from giving the Wehrmacht orders at the front, but even this might follow if Hitler demanded it. So, on May 12, Warlimont produced the first draft. On the suggestion of Alfred Rosenberg, the Minister Designate for occupied Russia, Warlimont exempted Russian officials who stayed at their posts without offering resistance. (In the final draft, these "peaceful administrators" for whom Rosenberg had recommended exemption from the order were exempted only from shooting at sight.) In each case a decision would have to be taken later whether to hand them over to the Security Service. However, identification as a political functionary by any German officer possessing disciplinary powers was sufficient for executing a Russian prisoner, provided the officer got the support of one other officer and one NCO.[13]

There was still no definition of a commissar. For this purpose, Warlimont consulted Rudolf Lehmann, head of the legal section of the High Command. Lehmann was already engaged in preparing the parallel decree, known as the Barbarossa Jurisdiction Order; this order was designed to protect the German soldier when he "struck toward the rear with the same methods as when attacking the enemy in the field." Distributed by Keitel on May 14, 1941, to no less than 340 commands, the Barbarossa Jurisdiction Order protected the German officer who "gave orders that appealed to the impulses of his people." It became for the next three years the soldier's charter for partisan warfare, but the two orders were not strictly complementary, as Lehmann was reminded when he raised the question of defining a commissar with Keitel. "Herr Ministerialdirektor," he was told, "we are talking only of jurisdiction here."[14] But Lehmann was not to be put off. If the gen-

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erals wanted to shift their responsibility to OKW, so Lehmann wanted to shift the responsibility of the Judge Advocate's department—and he succeeded in getting his own rider incorporated in the order. "Military courts must not be charged with the measures indicated under I and II." Thanks to Lehmann, Hitler realized his threat to "leave the courts at home."[15]

Alfred Jodl, however, as head of the operations section at OKW, felt less complacent about the repercussions of the Commissar Order than his chief, Keitel. Before the draft went off to Hitler, he scribbled a marginal note that the order might be described as a reprisal. In a war that had not even begun, Jodl declared that they would have to count on Russian reprisals against captured German airmen.[16] Jodl's assumption took an even broader form in the final text as circulated by Brauchitsch:

"When fighting Bolshevism, one cannot count on the enemy's acting in accordance with the principles of humanity or international law. In particular, one must expect that the treatment of our prisoners by the political commissars of all types, who are the true pillars of resistance, will be cruel, inhuman, and dictated by hate."[17]

"Of all types"! Neither Warlimont nor Brauchitsch had the slightest notion of what a political commissar was. Brauchitsch apparently thought that these people would be so accommodating as to surrender, wearing a red star and an inwoven sickle and hammer on their sleeves. The form in which Brauchitsch finally issued the order provided no definition of a commissar: "On principle," the order reads, "the personal impression of the commissar's attitude is of more importance than the facts of the case, for which proof may not exist."

The same Walter von Brauchitsch, who signed the final draft of the Commissar Order on June 8, had undertaken personally before the High Command on March 30 to see to it that no such orders were issued. However, when interrogated on the subject at Nuremberg in 1946, Brauchitsch maintained that he had killed the Commissar Order by issuing another order "for the maintenance of discipline along the lines and regulations that had applied in the past."[18] The counter-order had been effective, Brauchitsch maintained, though apparently Hitler had never reproached him for it. During one of the most inadequate cross-examinations of that historic trial, Brauchitsch swore that he knew of no case of Hitler's Order being carried out. This was untrue, as we shall see, and Brauchitsch knew it.

At the High Command trial of 1948, both the full text of the Commissar Order, as distributed by Brauchitsch, and the alleged counter-order were produced. But by this time Brauchitsch, blind and dying, had been declared unfit to plead. His perjury was never brought home to him, though his counter-order, when read out in court, turned out to be no counter-order at all. In the first place, it was dated May 24, 1941, that is to say, two weeks *before* Brauchitsch issued the Commissar Order. It was actually an annex to Keitel's Barbarossa Jurisdiction Order of May 14. That order, as it was drafted by the devious-minded Lehmann, was as dangerous to German discipline as it was to any Russian civilians who incurred suspicion. Lehmann had laid it down that soldiers could be court-martialed for offenses against civilians only when these offenses threatened military discipline. Moreover, the sentences for such cases were to be severe only when outright mutiny was proved.[19] "Senseless destruction of property" is specifically mentioned as an instance where leniency would be expected.

It was this, the problem of German military discipline, and not the wholesale execution of prisoners, which worried Brauchitsch. He tried to explain in his annex that the troops must not be allowed to become unmanageable; the order was not to be construed by the soldier as license to act as he pleased toward civilians; he must always be bound by the orders of his officers. But since it had been laid down that a captain could shoot anyone he liked after consulting a lieutenant and an NCO, authority for the soldier to treat civilians as he pleased was not going to be difficult to obtain. Brauchitsch's annex of May 24 was, in any case, suppressed in subsequent issues of the Barbarossa Jurisdiction Order, which made the killing of civilians a matter beneath the attention of courts-martial till the very end. One general who was tried in the High Command case, Karl von Roques, construed the order as entitling him to impose the standing penalty of sixty days detention for insubordination

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on soldiers who shot Jews on their own initiative.[20]

In fact, the annex, which Brauchitsch issued on May 24, did not deal with the treatment of captured commissars at all. It merely stated that orders on this subject would be issued shortly. But after he had issued the Commissar Order on June 8, Brauchitsch made a curious attempt to smooth out the contradictions. On June 11, he called a conference of intelligence officers and judges advocate at Warsaw. Here Major General Eugen Mueller, Brauchitsch's "special assignments" general, explained that it was not always necessary to shoot civilians in cases of disobedience. In minor cases they could be flogged, a precedent which the Russians themselves had provided in 1914, when they had occupied a portion of East Prussia.[21]

That this was for the ears of the intelligence officers (IC's) is explained by their unique position as links between the army commands and the police squads of the Security Service. It was not their first briefing. A few days earlier, the IC's had been addressed by Heydrich, Admiral Canaris, and Eduard Wagner, in the old War Office building in the Bendlerstrasse. It seems most probable that the ultrasecret and purely verbal part of the Commissar Order, the instructions for the racial extermination of the Jews of the Soviet Union, was communicated to the higher intelligence officers who stayed behind after the meeting.[22]

IN ADDITION to Walter von Brauchitsch, the man who is most usually discussed in connection with the resistance to the Commissar Order is Admiral Canaris. While some German writers have credited Brauchitsch with encouraging an army plot to depose Hitler at the time of the war crisis of 1938, Canaris has been credited with opposition activities which lasted until his arrest in July 1944.

Canaris's personal honor was as much involved in the Commissar and Barbarossa Jurisdiction orders as Brauchitsch's, and he seems to have been aware of it. According to his biographer, Karl Abshagen, he warned the IC's at this stage that the new powers of the Security Service were a trap to involve them in the murderous policies of the SS and make impossible any future resistance to them.[23] Canaris, however, did not make this objection to Keitel, with whom he was on good terms, and certainly not to Hitler. In fact, he waited for the initiative to come from the other side. In the absence of any rules for identification, the screening teams of the Security Service picked out Tartars and other Asiatics from the prisoner-of-war cages and shot them on the pretense that they were circumcised Jews. This conflicted with Hitler's own instructions that prisoners from the Soviet minority races were to receive preferential treatment. It was therefore the head of the Prisoner of War Office at OKW, General Hermann Reinecke, who took the initiative in calling a joint meeting with Canaris and with Mueller of the Gestapo.

It is odd that Canaris's pious biographer should have to record that this great Chief of Intelligence was too afraid of "Gestapo Mueller" to go himself,[24] sending instead the head of his Section II, the Austrian Brigadier Erwin Lahousen. At Nuremberg, Lahousen declared that he had been chosen because "in his subordinate position he could use stronger language [with Mueller] than Canaris." On these lines Canaris would have done better still to have sent the office charwoman, but then Canaris was always a mystery to his colleagues.[25] The meeting took place in Reinecke's office on July 15. Lahousen came, armed with evidence that the Russians already knew about the screenings and executions and were exploiting them as propaganda; that German soldiers were becoming demoralized by the spectacle of mass executions. These, Mueller replied, could be held in remote places and he would give the orders, but he refused to define the Security Service rules for screening. Indications of superior intelligence or of being Jewish were reason enough to be chosen for execution. Reinecke, a desk officer who had begun the war in charge of civil defense in Berlin, backed up Gestapo Chief Mueller throughout the discussion, declaring that German staff officers did not understand National Socialism and still lived in the Ice Age. In exasperation Lahousen turned to Mueller and asked, "Do you determine it by the height of the person or by the size of his shoes?"[26]

Two days later, however, Keitel embodied Mueller's proposal in an order, which was again issued to 340 commands. It confirmed that executions must take place at least 600 yards from the prisoner camps. The camp

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commanders, members of the Wehrmacht, would be relieved completely of responsibility for screening prisoners. The selection teams of the Security Service, who were allowed to employ trustworthy prisoners as informers, were declared by Keitel to be fully trained and competent. For the denunciation of "political, criminal, or in some way undesirable elements," former Communist informers were not barred, though henceforward the evidence of more than one informer would be required.[27]

The same vague terms were repeated by Reinecke on September 8 in a code of rules for the treatment of Russian prisoners. In this code the original Commissar Order became expanded into a license to exterminate all prisoners who gave the slightest trouble.[28] Any indulgence by German guards, any friendly disposition, was to be punished with severity. The guards must use their arms at the slightest indication of disobedience. Where prisoners were at work, the guards must keep enough distance to enable them to use their firearms at once, firearms which they would also need against civilians who tried to speak with prisoners.

The certainty that these widely circulated rules would be conveyed to the enemy within a short time spurred Canaris to intervene again, furtively and indirectly, at OKW. A week later he forwarded to Keitel a memorandum which had been drafted by an expert on international law, none other than James Helmuth von Moltke, grandnephew of the famous Field Marshal and one of the members of the conspiracy against Hitler who were executed after July 1944. The memorandum cited the Reinecke rules on the one hand, and on the other the latest Soviet rules, which had been published as recently as July and which contained no divergences from the Hague convention of 1907. Knowing that this argument would not appeal to Hitler, the author was clever enough to insinuate that under the actual conditions of war neither side would be able to apply its rules, whose main use would be for home consumption. If Russian propaganda could show that their own rules were more humane, Germany would lose her prestige among likely collaborators. It would also become impossible to protest at the ill-treatment of German prisoners in Russia.[29]

Keitel declared at Nuremberg that he had not only submitted the memorial to Hitler but that he had even proposed that he should abolish the screening teams. Hitler however would change nothing, declaring that there would be no way of ascertaining whether the Russians were treating their prisoners according to the international conventions or not.[30] Yet Keitel's marginal comments, scribbled on the rejected memorandum, tell a different story. Against the complaint that the screening operations were secret, he wrote "Highly expedient," and he vigorously rejected the complaint that the results could not be checked. Finally he scribbled a postscript: "These objections arise from the military conception of chivalrous warfare. We are dealing here with the destruction of a world philosophy and therefore I approve such measures and sanction them—Keitel."[31]

Of course, Keitel explained that he had only written what Hitler told him to write. Nevertheless the Canaris memorandum was the most damning document in the entire dossier that brought Keitel to the gallows, and it left Canaris with the laurels of a hero. But what had Canaris done after his memorandum was returned to him? He still shrank from direct intervention and direct protest and the obvious results followed. In spite of Canaris's much-described dossier on SS atrocities, his IC officers with the various army commands made no use of their powers of veto. Some of the bulletins, issued by the commanders of extermination groups, even acknowledge the help of Canaris's own Secret Field Gendarmerie in arranging the massacres.

RESISTANCE to the Commissar Order, such as it was, now passed into the hands of individual army and army corps commanders, while the three field marshals commanding army groups still waited for the lead that had been promised them by Brauchitsch. After the publication of the Reinecke rules, on September 8, they became more restive. Von Bock forwarded a memorandum to Hitler, which had been drafted by his adventurous Chief of Staff, Henning von Tresckow, but he toned it down to something fairly innocuous. Von Rundstedt forbade his soldiers to take part in "measures of the Security Service" or to witness them or, above all, to take photographs.[32] Both signed the protest of their colleague, Friedrich Ritter von Leeb,

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commander in chief of the Northern Army Group.

Leeb was a sixty-four-year-old officer who had been ennobled by the Kaiser in the First World War, but he had reacted so negatively to Hitler's Blitzkrieg plans that the Hassell-Goerdeler circle wanted to enroll him in their conspiracy. Although Leeb admitted that he was terrified of Hitler, whom he regarded as "a demon, a devil," he felt bolder in his headquarters in Kovno, where in the course of their visits he persuaded Keitel and Brauchitsch to support his complaints. Finally, ten days after the return of Canaris's memorandum, the criticism of the three field marshals was presented to Hitler in a document drawn up by Eugen Mueller. It was argued in this report that the power of the political commissars would not be as strong in the Red Army if they did not face the certainty of execution after surrender.[33]

Nevertheless, when presented to Hitler at the daily *Lagebesprechung,* the report was promptly rejected, while a few days later Brauchitsch was instructed to re-issue the Commissar Order and its screening rules to a still wider list. There had been little reason to expect Hitler to change his mind. On September 25, 1941, his armies surrounded Leningrad and were about to enter Kiev. The final assault on Moscow was due to begin within a few days and the Blitzkrieg was to be won before the winter. Since Hitler already held over a million Russian prisoners, while Stalin only held a few thousand Germans, fear neither of reprisal nor nemesis caused him serious anxiety. So the screening rules were not relaxed till early in 1942, after the sobering effects of a winter campaign and the acute labor shortage had caused utilitarian counsel to prevail at court. Even then, no part of the original Commissar Order and Barbarossa Jurisdiction Order was ever repealed. In June 1943, Halder's successor as Chief of Staff, Kurt Zeitzler, wanted to rescind the Commissar Order, because it discouraged Russian desertions. Hitler would not revoke it formally—perhaps because it was too dangerous to admit that the order existed.[34]

WHILE the direct execution of suspected political commissars ceased to be carried out by Wehrmacht commanders after the first winter campaign, the Security Service never lost the authority to drag whomever they liked out of the camps in order to murder them in secret places. However, after February 1942, the right was exercised only at the request of camp commanders. One such case occurred as late as December 1942, when 78 badly wounded and maimed prisoners were moved by a Wehrmacht camp commandant at Zhitomir in the Ukraine to a so-called "education camp" run by the SS, in reality a penal establishment. From here they were taken in two batches to a lonely spot and shot under Wehrmacht supervision, though a few of them escaped.[35] This close cooperation occurred nearly a year after the alleged lapsing of the Commissar Order.

The Nuremberg prosecution had difficulty in finding out how far Wehrmacht commanders had carried out the order themselves. Most of the execution reports which were produced at the 1948 High Command trial concerned Leeb's Northern army group. In this group there was Hoepner's 4th Panzer Army which claimed the liquidation of 172 commissars in the first four weeks. More modestly the 16th and 18th Armies on Leeb's front claimed to have shot 96 commissars by December 1941.[36] Leeb, still asserting that he had fought the Commissar Order, explained that these figures really proved how successful he had been. Leeb assumed that one man in every eighty of the 340,000 prisoners, taken in the advance to Leningrad, would be a *politruk*—and that made 4,250 *politruks*. To have shot only 96 of them was indeed a sabotage of Hitler's orders. That a German field marshal could believe that there was a political commissar to every Russian platoon was odd enough, but anybody could be made to pass as a political commissar. One of the prisoners who was executed on this front was a septuagenarian professor of Slavonic literature from the Leningrad Academy of Sciences, who was caught while visiting a Home Guard unit with a mobile cinema van.[37]

The ingenious argument of Ritter von Leeb did not appeal to his co-defendant, General Hans Reinhardt, who declared that the execution figures were fictitious from beginning to end. At that time Reinhardt had been a corps commander under Erich Hoepner, whom the world knows better as one of the conspirators of July 20, 1944. According to Reinhardt, Hoepner used these figures in

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order to silence the OKW hierarchy and to make them believe that he had carried out the order.[38] The same story had been told at Nuremberg in 1946 by another of Hoepner's corps commanders, Erich von Manstein. Nevertheless the commander of Heydrich's special extermination group on Leeb's front had written to his master that he had found Hoepner's cooperation "close and almost cordial"—and this in a notorious report which described the murder of 221,000 Jews in the Baltic States and White Russia.[39]

These executions, carried out by the Wehrmacht between June and December 1941, were but a fraction of one per cent of the total killings, which were done by the Security Service under cover of the Commissar Order. Some of them took place on German soil, where the apparently native need to record everything in writing has preserved something of their extent and nature. Toward the end of August, "Gestapo Mueller" appears to have issued a decree, concerning the special screening rules applicable to Germany. The screened prisoners were to be transferred from Wehrmacht jurisdiction to the SS. The execution warrants had to be countersigned in Mueller's office and the executions themselves could only take place in concentration camps. In this way Mueller was kept fully conversant with the progress of extermination. On October 10, 1941, he admitted to an anxious delegation from the Ministry of Labor and the Rosenberg Ministry that of 20,000 Russian prisoners who had been screened in German camps 16,000 had already been executed.[40] Reinecke told the delegation that in future Russian prisoners who had been sent to Germany to work would not be screened. That, however, was not the end of the executions.

In Germany, Mueller was able to trade on the panic fear of Communism, which had caused the abandonment of the original plan to bring in all the Red Army prisoners. Warlimont's circular of June 16, 1941, mentions eighteen camps which were intended for the reception of 790,000 prisoners.[41] Inadequate as it was, this space was not taken up, since Hitler forbade Brauchitsch to send any more Russian prisoners back to Germany and this was a month after the invasion, when more than a million prisoners had been taken. Franz Halder then complained that it was impossible to provide camps or subsistence for such numbers in the war zone, where starvation and cannibalism were being reported everywhere. It took many months for the OKW to organize camps in the civil government areas so that, already by February 1942, 2,800,000 prisoners had died, most of them in open compounds close to the battlefields where they had surrendered.[42]

No doubt Hitler preferred that these masses should die outside Germany, but the panic fear of the spread of Communism must have been an added argument, used by the party leaders to persuade him to such a complete change of policy. In the offices of the provincial Gauleiters there was but one idea, to rid the German rationing system as quickly as possible of the burden of the Russian prisoners who had arrived before the ban. Thus the terms of Mueller's decree were exploited by unscrupulous camp commandants, backed by the Gestapo offices and the Gauleiters, in order to get rid of the sick and incapacitated as well as the Jews and the politically suspect. The 10,800 victims of Sachsenhausen concentration camp were dispatched in the months of September and October alone. At the first Sachsenhausen trial, figures of 13,000 and even 18,000 were mentioned. Often a machine was used, allegedly the inspiration of the first inspector of the concentration camp system, Theodor Eicke. It was disguised as a measuring apparatus and it put a bullet in the victim's neck without alarming the waiting line in the adjoining room.[43] The same apparatus was used later in the war at Mauthausen.

At Auschwitz the commandant, Rudolf Hoess, used Russian prisoners for his first experiment with the "Zyklon B" gas, which became the principal means for exterminating the Jews. On September 15, 600 invalid Russian prisoners and 250 inmates of the camp infirmary were packed in Block No. 11 and the building was filled with gas.[44] Hoess, who admits that the method was inefficient, describes how he gassed another 900 Russian prisoners more successfully in the infirmary morgue. Another 10,000 Russians died during the winter while constructing the second Auschwitz camp at Birkenau. They had been delivered in a state of advanced starvation by the Wehrmacht commander of Lamsdorf camp, the one who recommended that prisoners should make their own bedding out of

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paper refuse.[45] Hoess merely failed to keep them alive, though his memoirs describe their condition with clinical precision and almost with sympathy.

The genuine hunt for political commissars, as opposed to the mere reduction of the numbers of prisoners of war under the cloak of the Commissar Order, was naturally hottest in officer camps. The largest was at Hammelburg, east of Frankfort, an institution which housed such VIP's as Stalin's son. A captured Red Army judge-advocate, turned fascist, assisted the Gestapo, with the aid of a secret camp cabal and some former Czarist officers from outside. The Gestapo inspector, Paul Ohler, examined 15,000 captured officers, 500 of whom were taken in trucks to Dachau and shot on the rifle range of the camp guards.[46]

It was the same story of continuous shootings and phenol injections at other concentration camps, Lublin, Buchenwald, Flossenbuerg, and Gross-Rosen. In a Germany where civilians moved freely and where there were infinite opportunities for gossip, official criticism fastened on the waste of prisoner labor. Supported by Himmler and Heydrich, Mueller's position was so strong that Reinecke's assurances of October 10 bore no immediate fruits. However, on October 31 Keitel obtained Hitler's authority to lift the ban on importing further prisoners from Russia, while on November 7 Goering declared that scruples were of secondary importance compared with the value of Russian labor. Bolshevism in Germany was a matter which could safely be left in the hands of the Security Service.[47] Yet indiscriminate mass-screening did not end till February 1942, when the crisis ceased at the front and Russian prisoners in hundreds of thousands crawled out of the box-cars to savor the culture of the West and to nibble the grass outside the incredibly neat railway stations.

IN THE meantime there had been one unique case of opposition by the military, brilliantly documented at the Nuremberg trials by a complete Gestapo file which had survived. On September 12, 1941, the Munich Gestapo began to busy themselves with the 5,328 Russian prisoners of war at Moosburg camp. Having learnt from Reinecke's office that the screening of these prisoners had been only superficial, they sent a Security Service team to Moosburg in November. With the aid of confidential agents in the camp, 410 "intolerable persons" were weeded out. They included 25 Jewish interpreters, 47 incurably sick prisoners, and 147 alleged fanatical Communists. Of these 310 were taken to Dachau to be shot.

Major Meinel, deputy prisoner-of-war inspector for Wehrkreis VII, protested to the Gestapo. He attacked Reinecke's contract with Mueller and threatened to raise the whole question of treatment of prisoners with OKW. The Gestapo agent then went off to the "Higher SS and Police Leader" for Bavaria, Baron Friedrich von Eberstein, to demand Meinel's recall. Eberstein approached Mueller, who did not reply, and in the meantime discovered that Meinel enjoyed the full support of Major-General von Saur, his chief. These two officers were protecting 400 Russian prisoners who had been screened at Moosburg and Regensburg camps and who should have been delivered to the SS. On January 16, 1942, Meinel refused to hand any more prisoners over to the Gestapo, declaring that he had received instructions from OKW not to do so. In view of the changed policy announced by Goering, this was possibly no bluff but the truth. The Gestapo, however, were not put off by that. From Munich they again approached Mueller, declaring that Meinel had formed his 400 Russians into a labor detachment.

There was still no reply from Mueller, but on February 9, the Munich Gestapo office persuaded von Eberstein to make a personal telephone call to Mueller's deputy in Berlin, Colonel Panzinger. Eberstein was a figurehead SS man, who was considered so respectable that during the Nuremberg trial he was chosen by the SS as their spokesman—on account of his gentlemanly ignorance of anything that had ever happened anywhere. But the prosecution never asked Eberstein about his officious telephone call which resulted in the delivery of all 400 Russian prisoners to Buchenwald camp, where, on February 17, 1942, they were duly murdered.[48] Possibly it was the last mass execution of Russian prisoners in Germany, though in that country no serious effort was made in the following years to keep Russian prisoners alive, unless they chose to become collaborators.

The official German figure of 473,000

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Russian prisoners exterminated, represents barely an eighth of those who died. Today it may be too late to speak any more about barbarism in war. The Germans began the war with the indiscriminate bombing of a European capital, thus initiating something for which they paid with 410,000 civilians killed and perhaps as many maimed and mutilated. The whole world has since lived in the shadow of the atom bomb; in the uncertainties of the future, the Hague and Geneva conventions may be superannuated instruments. In March 1941, they were not. The regulations comprised in Hitler's Commissar Order were the most monumental abuse known to history of what Edmund Burke had called "the mode of civilized warfare."

Among the generals who carried out the regulations, Keitel and Jodl were hanged; Brauchitsch, Leeb, Rundstedt, and Reinhardt are dead; Warlimont, Reinecke, Lehmann, and Roques have been released from prison. Some are writing memoirs to explain how Hitler lost the war for them, and others still are back on the army list.

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25. *IMT*, vol I, p. 279 (evidence Lahousen).
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27. *IMT*, vol. III, pp. 203-4; doc. PS 502
28. *IMT*, doc. PS 1519.
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32. *Trials*, doc. NOKW 541.
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46. *Trials*, vol. XI, p. 26. Juergen Thorwald, *Wen sie verderben wollen*, pp. 171-8.
47. *IMT*, vol. VII, p. 23; doc. EC 194.
48. The whole of the foregoing narrative is derived from the Nuremberg Document R 178, of which 27 pages are printed in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (U.S. Government).

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# OUR FIFTY MILLION POOR

## *Forgotten Men of the Affluent Society*

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

A FAIR statement of a current myth about poverty in the United States would probably go something like this: the poor are a small, rapidly declining group; they have achieved a substantial measure of protection as a result of the reforms of the New Deal; insofar as they exist, they are mostly non-whites and rural Southerners; and as industrial productivity continues to rise, they will entirely disappear.

Such is the myth. The facts present the hard outline of a different, and far less pretty, picture. As many as 50 million Americans continue to live below those standards which we have been taught to regard as the decent minimums for food, housing, clothing, and health. These millions are, in fact, a predominantly urban, white population; they have scarcely been affected by the reforms of the past quarter-century; and as a group they have profited least from the striking gains in productivity which have characterized the American economy since World War II.

If a rising productivity has failed to suppress poverty in the United States—as prematurely claimed by some of our more sanguine theorists—it has conspicuously piled up the profits (distributed and undistributed) of the country's most successful corporations. Between 1940 and 1957, according to a report from the Department of Commerce, the country's total corporate profits—after taxes—were tripled. The same productivity has benefited the best organized sectors of labor, and served to swell the over-$5,000 per year category in the government's income statistics. The poor, however, were not affected appreciably by the boom generated in the Korean war, and the statistics of poverty remained at about 1949 levels, up to 1956. In the last two years, the numbers of the poor have increased; and some of the progress made previously toward minimum standards has been wiped out. Those who were already poor were the first to become unemployed in the recession of 1958.

By even the most conservative official definitions, close to a third of the nation (the phrase echoes out of the past) is living at economic levels which, as a 1956 Congressional resolution put it, "are below the prevailing standards of adequacy." More gloomily, the same resolution stated that these millions of Americans are "today living at income levels permanently, not temporarily, depressed."

In 1949, a Congressional body, the Joint Subcommittee on Low Income Families, statistically defined poverty in terms of an urban family income of less than $2,000 a year, or a rural income under $1,000; at the time, the CIO criticized this definition as too low, but in any case, since then the cost of living has risen by more than 25 per cent. In 1952, the Bureau of Labor Statistics calculated "adequate" budgets for a family of four in various cities; its lowest figure was $3,812 a year (New Orleans) and its highest $4,454 (Washington, D. C.). The most recent revision of the Bureau's figures, reported in *Medical Economics*, set the low at $4,288 for Scranton, Pennsylvania, in September 1958. These government esti-

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mates are conservative. In 1954, the Heller Research Committee of the University of California concluded that an adequate urban family budget should be no less than $5,353. (Its computations were modest: rent was figured at $52 a month.) On a less generous estimate, most authorities would agree that an urban family of four needs more than $3,500—probably $4,000—to subsist in 1959. Roughly 25 million families, not far from half of all American families, are living on less than $4,000 a year today.

Suppose, however, that we set the standard of adequacy still lower—at $3,000 a year. At least 40 million, perhaps closer to 60 million people, are living at or below this level. A recent Federal Reserve Board report tells us that 34 per cent of the "spending units" (families or unattached individuals) in the United States had incomes of less than $3,000 in 1958. If, on the other hand, we use the Commerce Department's figures for 1957, one-quarter of the families in the nation were below the $60-a-week level. (The statistical discrepancies spring from the recession, and from the fact that some "spending units" represent single people, others farm families who have non-money income.) When one takes into account the inflation of the last two decades, this $3,000-a-year standard is about that which the WPA provided to unmarried workers during the depression period of the 30's. And, as Senator Paul Douglas has pointed out, "the regional differences in the cost of living are much, much less than commonly claimed, between cities of appreciable size and as regards the difference between large and small cities." Of the families who had incomes under $3,000 in March 1958, only 18 per cent lived on farms. The South, to be sure, was poorest; some 43 per cent of its families were earning less than $3,000 a year in 1957. But 31 per cent of the people in the North Central states were similarly impoverished.

Setting low estimates of "adequacy," making allowances for farm families who don't need as much money income in order to survive, taking account of regional differences, the problem of poverty in the United States remains enormous. Poverty is not, as shall be seen, a condition which is disappearing; nor is there any ground to hope for an easy, automatic amelioration of it.

In any attempt to describe the American poor, old people must be listed first. More than a third of the people over sixty-five years of age in 1957 had incomes of less than $1,890 a year ($36 a week). These aged live on inadequate pensions in the blighted neighborhoods of the cities—often enough, in the loneliness of rooming houses. Insofar as pensions are tied to previous earnings, it may be surmised that a great proportion of them were always poor. According to a recent survey by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a majority of those who made less than $3,500, who worked for thirty-five years, and were covered by a union pension clause, were receiving benefits of $40 a week or less. The older people who were not covered by some negotiated plan (25 per cent of office workers and 40 per cent of plant workers were without retirement benefits in 1957) had an average *monthly* income of $62.35 in 1956.

The inadequacy of prevailing pensions achieves terrible meaning in the light of the widespread economic discrimination against the aged. Older people have been finding it more difficult to obtain and hold jobs over the last fifty years. The National Planning Association, in 1952, concluded that the aged will find it even more difficult in the future. The NPA study declared: "On the most optimistic assumptions, the number of non-earners among the aged will not only remain very large, but will grow as the number of the aged grows."

Second in any catalogue of the poor come the unskilled workers. In an economy growing ever more complex and technical, the unskilled are largely doomed from the moment they abandon their studies to seek employment. Those who leave school without acquiring industrial or commercial skills generally do so for one or both of two reasons: they are the children of uneducated parents (with little regard for education as

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a value), and they are members of large families (which need the youth's wages). In 1949, the Joint Subcommittee reported that 62 per cent of the fathers of families which earned less than $3,000 had not finished grade school. In 1957, the Department of Commerce estimated that more than a quarter of these low income families had seven or more members.

Yet, despite their propensity to large families, the very poor tend to have fewer wage earners than the lower middle class. In 1957, only 15 per cent of the families with incomes under $3,000 had three people working—as compared with 28 per cent in the $6,000-$7,000 group. The aged and infirm relatives of the poor are part of this story; children are another.

At work, the unskilled are largely unprotected by recent social advances. Almost two-thirds of American workers and employees were not organized into unions in 1957. A third of the work force—some 20 million workers in agriculture, retail trades, service industries, agricultural processing, etc.—was still excluded from the minimum wage law in 1957. Unemployment insurance varies radically in its benefits from state to state, and there are huge gaps in coverage. A recent University of Michigan survey concluded that 36 per cent of the unemployed had received no unemployment benefits during the 1958 recession and that 85 per cent of those who did found them inadequate. Last March, the AFL-CIO estimated that two million jobless workers (about 40 per cent of the total) were either without coverage or had exhausted their claims. Thus, for the unskilled worker outside the major interstate industries, the "social security" achieved by the New Deal tends to be rather problematical.

Local and regional pockets of poverty develop among skilled workers, too, when an industry is threatened with widespread shutdowns or moves South to take advantage of lower wage rates. The textile mills of New England and the West Virginia coal fields are two examples of industries where skilled workers remain poor. Solomon Barkin of the Textile Workers Union described their problem to a Congressional Committee in 1954: "The workers receiving less than $1.25 an hour are not paid low wages because they are unproductive or inefficient. . . . The trouble is that they are weak bargainers. They live and work in low-wage areas. They are immobile—they are the heads of families, or wives, or young people or older men and women. They suffer from racial or sex discrimination. Many possess skills that are not easily transferrable. Many are victims of employer-controlled labor markets."

Away from the cities and towns, migratory workers constitute a substantial segment of the poor. No one knows exactly how many of them there are. It was noted by an officer of the Sharecroppers' Fund that the U.S. government "takes census figures of migrant birds, but not of migrant workers." Paul Jacobs recently estimated in the *Reporter* that there were as many as one million farm workers who work less than 150 days of the year. They are not covered by the fair labor standards laws enacted under the New Deal. They are victimized by accidents, shipped like cattle in trucks, and work side by side in the fields with their small children. They often live in camps like the one the San José (California) *Mercury* described as the "longest slum in the world. . . . Village conditions in Pakistan are no worse."

These migrant laborers are part of a larger revolution in agriculture. They, together with machines, are replacing thousands of unskilled rural people who have for various reasons moved into the cities. Most of those who have left the farms have been thrust into urban slums, with no preparation for a new way of life. In *Harper's* last year, Albert Votaw described the 70,000 "hillbillies" who have upset Chicago's population of four million. Their children come from inferior schools and find it difficult to adjust to the new ones. The adults, unfamiliar with the rationality and speed of city ways, tend to job-jumping and rent-skipping. In an environment of high racial tension, these white,

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Anglo-Saxon Protestants have awakened prejudice and hatred that equals the hostility toward the Negro. The study is one of a fairly small group, but Chicago's problem is duplicated in several urban slums, among the "Arkies" of St. Louis and the country folk who came to work in Detroit's industry, for example.

Finally, any catalogue of the poor must include Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Indians, and other members of the so-called non-white minority groups. In 1957, the average non-white worker's wage was not much more than half that of the average white worker. The minorities among the poor suffer a double indignity: their slums are segregated. Like the aged worker, the Negro, the Puerto Rican, the Mexican, the Indian, are among the first to be fired and last to be hired. Yet, it must be emphasized, America's poverty is *not* primarily racial. In the Commerce Department tabulations, three-fourths of the Americans earning less than $1,890 are white.

In the course of a walk through the slums of any of our major cities, one may see these types of the poor living side by side. Some explanation of their movements was provided by Daniel Seligman of *Fortune,* in his chapter on "The Enduring Slums" in *The Exploding Metropolis.* "The slums are crowded," he writes, "because there are more jobs to be had; the news was spread to small towns and farms, the South, and to Puerto Rico, and in the wake of the postwar industrial expansion there has been a great migration of rural laborers and semi-skilled craftsmen to the big city. They work as sweepers at General Motors; they are scrap throwers at Inland Steel; they push hand trucks around New York's garment center."

In other words, the growth of poverty reflects massive changes in the American economy itself. The great improvement—the so-called "income revolution"—since World War II has been a rise in the number of families earning between $5,000 and $10,000 a year. (Some of the improvement is illusory, because the purchasing power of the 1959 dollar is about that of the 1939 fifty-cent piece.) Nevertheless, although many individuals and families did in fact escape from poverty to the lower-middle class in the last decade, there has been almost no change in the proportion of the poor in our population. Their share of the national wealth remains what it was. Between 1947 and 1956, the Commerce Department has found, the number of individuals in the lowest two-fifths of the money structure actually increased by .3 per cent. The hard core of impoverished millions remained.

ESCAPE from poverty is difficult; illness is one of the major barriers. Because of the unhygienic conditions of the slums, the poor are more susceptible to disease of all kinds, and they are thus more likely to lose pay or their jobs because of illness. In 1957, the Commerce Department reported, 36 per cent of male workers earning less than $3,000 a year lost some working time due to illness: the highest concentration of illness was among those who earned under $1,000 a year.

When disease strikes, the poor cannot afford proper care. For a time after President Truman's request for national health insurance was rejected by Congress, it seemed that private or semi-private medical plans might be on the way to remedying this situation. But the AFL-CIO estimated in 1957 that 37 per cent of American families lacked any medical insurance whatsoever, and that only 3 per cent had comprehensive coverage. Public clinical care is available to the poor in the cities—if they can endure the meanness of the conditions which often characterize public medicine. In any event, such care, even at its best, can do nothing to stop the incubation of disease in the conditions of poverty.

Physical illness has long been recognized as part of the slum complex. Now, social research adds mental disease to the picture. In New Haven, social scientists Hollingshead and Redlich found a striking correlation between low income and mental disease. Partly, it is a question of money for treatment after the breakdown has occurred. For

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example, in one mental hospital which they surveyed, 93 per cent of the patients from the top economic class were receiving some kind of psychoanalytic therapy. It was a private hospital, and so there were no patients present from the lowest class (Class V). Of those in the next grouping, however, only 19 per cent were getting analytic therapy. The poorer patients were generally treated by social workers and young doctors, and received shock treatment rather than systematic psychotherapy.

Yet the cost of care is not the only factor. Dr. Thomas Langer, in a paper read to the American Psychopathological Association, described a study which showed a definite relationship between poverty and the incidence of mental disturbance. One cause of greater mental illness among the poor, he suggested, is the cumulative effect of the stresses of slum life—not any single traumatic incident, but the grinding, wearing conditions of everyday living. Unscientific impressions would surely seem to corroborate Dr. Langer's hypothesis: it can hardly be argued that slum life is conducive to the emergence of a healthy personality.

CONDITIONS of housing for the poor have not improved at all since World War II. In fact, they have grown worse. Charles Abrams, former New York State Rent Commissioner and chairman of the State Commission Against Discrimination, has summarized the postwar development as follows: "Slums persist as our slum dwellings are being cut up into single rooms into which whole families are herded. The millions of Negroes and other minorities pouring into our cities are being forced to pay the highest rates for the shabbiest dwellings, and the competition for housing is increasing neighborhood tensions in a growing number of areas."

Public housing, which seemed a popular liberal cause in the 30's and 40's, is no longer an important factor in alleviating the situation. In 1957, according to Abrams, only 1,610 of the 35,000 public housing units Congress had authorized for that year were under contract by June. Present public housing bills offered by liberal Democrats in the Congress provide for fewer dwelling units annually than Senator Robert Taft recommended a decade ago. Abrams estimates the current need for new housing, public or private, at two million units a year. The current growth is less than a million; new construction is largely for upper and upper-middle income families.

The effect of these housing policies on our cities is all too obvious. The prospects for the future, according to Dr. Raymond Vernon of the business-backed Committee for Economic Development, are not reassuring. As the New York *Times* reported his projection: "Slums will march from downtown business districts to the suburbs in New York and twelve other major cities. . . . [Dr. Vernon] saw a 'gray belt' of urban decay spreading from the downtown skyscrapers to the city line. He also saw scant prospect of arresting the flight of middle-income families to the suburbs. When this group abandons an area, he said, the vacated buildings are converted to intensive low-income use."

The economic paradox is that the abandoned quarters become more expensive, rather than cheaper to rent—in flat contradiction to the old "trickle-down" theory, which assumed that the poor would ultimately inherit run-down middle-class dwellings at lower rents. But that theory assumed a housing surplus, rather than the shortage we have had since the war; it also assumed competitive rents, a tenants' market, which we have not had either. Today, loopholes in state and local rent-control laws often make it possible for the same apartment to draw rentals several times as high when it is split into small units than it did when it was used by a single family. At the same time, the shortage of good housing has made municipal inspectors loath to condemn substandard dwellings for obvious violations of health and safety codes. People live in these apartments for years after they have deteriorated below the standards set by official codes and regulations.

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Living in such housing conditions were two million urban families who, acccording to the 1950 census, did not have an inside toilet. Three million urban families in 1950 were without a tub or shower. In the New York metropolitan area alone, there were at least 150,000 units without shower or bath; 72,000 units which had plumbing which the census takers described as "dilapidated." The situation is worst in the racial ghetto: the 1950 census reported that half a million urban non-white housing units had no running water whatever inside the building. It will be interesting to see how much of an improvement is recorded by the census of 1960.

ONLY in the last two centuries has poverty been thought of as a social problem, capable of solution. Before then, it was considered as inevitable as floods or epidemics. As John Maynard Keynes wrote: "From the earliest times of which we have record—back, say, to two thousand years before Christ—down to the beginning of the 18th century, there was no very great change in the standard of living of the average man living in the civilized centers of the earth. Ups and downs certainly. Visitations of plague, famine, and war. Golden intervals. But no progressive, violent change."

The "progressive, violent change" came with the rise of science and capitalism. The earth was transformed and new possibilities of material well-being were explored, but the poor remained. The medieval fatalism which saw divine ordinance in the impoverishment of the masses was secularized; in the early 19th century, the poor were considered the necessary victims of political economy, rather than of God. Side by side with the technological revolution, there existed, in John Kenneth Galbraith's phrase, the "tradition of despair." For Adam Smith and those who followed him, the prospects of the poor were bleak.

Even the 19th-century revolutionists tended to skirt the problem of poverty. Marx envisioned a social revolution that would transform all of society, but he did not expect the very poor to achieve that revolution: the decisive force, he thought, would be the organized industrial workers.

Indeed, the "welfare state" as we know it today represents largely the effort of the organized millions in the trade unions and the liberal middle classes. In theory, they recognized the conception of a minimum human need, of a floor under human suffering; in practice, the welfare state was best geared to the needs of those who had struggled for it, rather than the poor. The landmarks of reform—the recognition of collective bargaining, unemployment compensation, old-age and survivors' insurance—were designed in the main to help those who had skilled, or semi-skilled, regular employment. Some of the benefits extended to the entire population, to be sure; and full employment during World War II made it possible for many poor people to improve their status. Still, the tens of millions of the poor remained to a large extent outside the scope of the welfare state, locked in their immemorial poverty.

FORTUNE magazine once described the American economy as a "Permanent Revolution." The Chamber of Commerce, declaring that "serious depressions have been abolished in the United States by popular vote," listed six Keynesian techniques as the stuff of its new faith. President Eisenhower has said that unending prosperity can be achieved through a "cooperative effort in which the policies of individuals and economic groups of all levels of government are consistent with one another and mutually reinforcing."

In view of this widespread optimism about the future of our economy, it is not surprising that we lack any comprehensive program to deal with mass poverty. It is, however, alarming that the existing social programs often enlarge poverty's scope. On the one hand, as Galbraith has pointed out in *The Affluent Society*, the postwar expansion of industrial production was accompanied by a roll-back in the traditional social services, and a refusal to consider the new problems that had arisen—such as the inadequacy of

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school systems to accommodate new millions of students.

On the other hand, many measures of the postwar period which seemed to spring from reform impulses were completely transformed in the course of the legislative and administrative processes. What is generally called "urban renewal" is a case in point. It seems utterly progressive in concept, yet often works to aggravate slum conditions. Last March, for example, the New York *Post* noted a "slum clearance" project on the city's West Side which is designed to provide accommodations for what federal and state laws call "middle-income" families. The rents are scheduled at $50 to $60 a month per room—or $250-$300 for a five-room apartment. (This requires an annual income of at least $12,000, probably more.) Meanwhile, the previous residents of the slum area must find accommodations where they can—in other slums, as a rule.

Many incidents of this kind prompted Charles Abrams's rueful conclusion: "We tore down slums—but intensified overcrowding and its unhealthy by-products. We built some housing for the middle class—but, as costs continued going up, we simply lowered the standards so that many houses were worse than those built in the 19th century. We increased the proportion of home-ownership—but spiraled the price and the debt."

Racial segregation is sometimes the chief result of "redevelopment." The Hyde Park-Kenwood Urban Renewal Plan in Chicago will reduce the number of housing units in the Chicago University area by a third (from about 6,000 to around 4,000). The buildings which are being torn down are part of an inter-racial slum. Those which will replace them will rent at $45 a room, or will sell as cooperatives at prices between $20,000 and $45,000. The plan will thus displace most of the area's low-income families and will also drive its Negroes back into the South Side ghetto. The development involves some $28 million in Federal funds.

The mere building of low-income, unsegregated housing is not, however, the entire answer to such conditions. Those who have visited some of the celebrated "projects" of the pre-war and postwar periods, as did Harrison E. Salisbury of the New York *Times* in his survey of juvenile delinquency, have been shocked by the same old familiar decay of poverty. These buildings have elevators and modern plumbing; but their inhabitants do not know how to use either. In the new, publicly financed, concrete-and-steel warrens, ignorance still survives, and with it the face of poverty.

Indeed, each factor in the equation of being poor tends to reinforce the others. Poverty means ignorance and unsanitary conditions; thus, no skills and more sickness, less work—more poverty. The child of the poor, as often as not, passes on poverty and its habits of mind to his own children. The statistics make it clear that the persistence of poverty is not simply a matter of new additions to the economy, like the Puerto Ricans in New York or the Mexicans in California and Texas. A large section of the poor inherits its poverty.

IN LARGE measure, poverty is a separate culture, another nation, with its own way of life. The poor are least capable of taking advantage of new opportunities, first to be struck down by a social crisis. In the recession of 1958, the number of people receiving less than $2,000 a year increased by 10 per cent; but because the recession was a "blue-collar" phenomenon, it had little effect on those better off. In fact, during the same period, another 10 per cent passed upward into the $7,500-$10,000 bracket.

Because poverty is a culture, the poor must often be helped onto the escalator of social mobility before they can benefit from traditional programs of social reform. Remedial action is, indeed, imperative to deal with the obvious scandals of a decrepit school system, inadequate health care, low pensions, and so on. Yet, so long as such actions are piecemeal, they will least help those who most need them. If, for example, there were a gigantic Federal outlay for school construction, student subsidy, and higher wages for teachers, the poorest pupils would be

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the last to benefit. Their uneducated parents, the poverty of their family life, would prevent them from capitalizing on these new opportunities. The same would be true if public-health services were expanded; so long as an environment of disease is the basic reality for the poor, new medical services will have little effect in lowering their disposition toward illness. Housing, schools, medical care, labor standards, communal institutions must be combined in a broad, planned program if any of these measures is to have real impact on poverty.

A comprehensive assault on poverty would first involve, obviously, a massive attack on America's rural and urban slums. But we have learned in the postwar years that great care must be taken not to construct new patterns of segregation—by race or by income. Furthermore, persistent effort at adult re-education is required if a new "project" is not itself to acquire a vicious slum character. We have recognized that the Negro child in the South who moves from an inferior segregated school to integrated facilities has at least temporary difficulty in taking full advantage of the new situation; the urban slum family which is simply dropped into a new, red-brick apartment house faces problems of the same order. There is an overriding need, largely neglected today, for the careful development of community institutions within the new housing units.

It has also been suggested that project tenants be permitted, once they are financially able, to buy their apartments; thus a housing cooperative would gradually be built up. A variation on this idea would extend low-cost, long-term government loans to such tenants in order to help them finance their purchase of the cooperative apartments. Either way, the projects would become much more heterogeneous, instead of being income ghettos, as most housing projects are today. Another new idea is deliberately to build schools and public housing in socially and economically "marginal" areas, in order that they may draw on a wide variety of groups and help to break down barriers of communication between them. Charles Abrams has frankly urged us to consider whether or not some sort of flexible "quota" system might be the best short-term expedient for promoting racial integration in public housing. Certainly ideas of this kind merit serious consideration if the old habits and attitudes of poverty are to be transformed.

Beyond such a massive assault on the slums, there remains the need for expanded social services of every kind. As Galbraith argues, the contradiction between our national wealth and our social services becomes more glaring each day. Yet, if there is serious thought about reaching the "permanently depressed," the eternal poor, there must be an initial attack of even greater proportions than the one Galbraith has outlined.

WHO is to accomplish such a program? Surely, it is easier to answer this question negatively than positively: we know who will not accomplish it. The conservative approach, which would entrust the task to private groups, municipalities, and the Federal government only in the last resort, is utterly incapable of dealing with the current reality. Private charities can accomplish some amelioration, but they lack the resources and the authority to make fundamental changes in the structure of poverty. The cities are faced with the flight of the middle classes to the suburbs, which means that the slum dwellers are becoming the major source of municipal tax revenue—hardly a promising situation. State governments, more often than not, are dominated by rural conservatism, and return only a cautious percentage of the urban tax dollar for social services. Thus, the most cursory glance at recent experience makes it clear that the magnitude of the job requires a comprehensive Federal action.

But Federal action means political leadership. The social workers and charitable organizations which collect facts on poverty in this or that sector of society do not constitute a political force. The labor movement often speaks in defense of the poor at Congressional hearings, but—in part because a majority of its members are no longer among

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the poor, thanks largely to their skills and organization—organized labor's political action in the last decade has paid less active attention to the problems of poverty.

Indeed, on the economic level it is quite possible that union gains have injured the very poor. If, as Sumner Slichter and others have recently argued, the unionized industrial workers have a stake in a moderately inflationary spiral, the poor are doubly victimized: excluded from the collective bargaining advances in wages, they must also pay the subsequent price increases. Because of this pattern, such economists as Clark C. Kerr believe that trade-union action, even of the most socially conscious "Reuther" type, cannot accomplish a significant redistribution of wealth. On the political level, the unions are, obviously, most concerned with legislation which aids the organized. The very poor have a spiritual ally in the labor movement—but, after all the election returns are in and all the legislative compromises made, the alliance has not been of substantial help in the last two decades.

The liberal middle class, which was so active in support of reform before the war, has not been particularly concerned with poverty in the postwar years. Many, too, have themselves recently risen from the low-income ranks and are more interested in protecting and enhancing their position than in broad social reforms. Furthermore, the great migration to the suburbs insulates millions from the facts of urban and rural poverty. And even in the cities, members of the middle class manage to isolate themselves from the facts of poverty. I recall, some years ago in St. Louis, taking a young practice teacher on social-work rounds in the neighborhood of a slum school. It was a rainy, autumn day and the first tenement corridor we entered was filled with the odor of decay and backed-up toilets. When she was twenty feet down the hall, the apprentice fled, sick to her stomach. Millions of Americans have simply never experienced the characteristic smell of poverty. Nor have they learned much about it in the schools: a survey of three standard college sociology textbooks turned up only a handful of references to poverty, one of them the bland statement that it had recently been done away with in the United States. Research into poverty is not conspicuous, either, among the many projects now engaging our army of behavioral scientists. Finally, even among observant city-dwellers who know all too well that poverty exists, the magic of "urban redevelopment" has persuaded many people that the slum complex is being steadily reduced—when in fact such "renewal" projects often increase the congestion of the slums.

It is apparent, upon reflection, that our recent lack of concern with poverty is part of the temper of moderation that has ruled our politics for the past two decades. In this period we have not seen the passage of any major social legislation. Since 1938, a conservative outlook has been dominant, though often masked by liberal phraseology. In some ways, the elections last November seemed to reflect a resurgence of more liberal political sentiment. But by now it is obvious that this is not the kind of strong tide capable of bringing about serious social legislation. A comprehensive attack on poverty must await the rise of some new, deeper impulse in our political life. Until that time, it is likely that the poor will remain with us, through cycles of boom and bust and successive elections, and that their way of life will perpetuate itself, to their own hurt and the great damage of our whole society.

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# CONVERSATIONS IN JORDAN

## *The Rulers and the Ruled*

JOHANN CASPAR

JORDAN and Lebanon, which were the scenes of British and American troop landings last July, are now the quietest of the Arab states, as political attention focuses on Colonel Nasser's Egypt and Colonel Kassem's Iraq. Relative freedom prevails in Lebanon; both the pro-Iraqi Communists and the pro-Nasser Ba'athists publish newspapers, and political refugees of both camps crowd the houses of the local leaders from Basta to Ashrafieh to Junyeh. The Lebanese government hopes that the two groups of refugees will cancel each other out, and meanwhile spend their money in the country.

The authorities in the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan, from which I recently returned, take a different tack. Censorship and police repression make it a politically "closed" society. Its rebellious elements, moreover, prefer to lie low; they are quite aware, though they do not say so publicly, that a coup on their part might well lead to a chaotic situation in which there would be the possibility of Israeli intervention. Nevertheless, no society is hermetically sealed, and the visitor to Jordan is soon aware that political unrest continues despite the efforts of King Hussein's government to achieve stability.

Crossing the frontier into the Hashemite kingdom, I was stopped by a beefy, red-faced Jordanian officer. Our encounter set the tone for the rest of my trip. Examining my suitcase, he found four Syrian newspapers which I had brought with me from Damascus. "These are illegal," he announced—and then settled back comfortably behind an imposing desk to study the forbidden papers.

Amman, the busy capital city, reflects Jordan's current state. Its contrasts are striking—the rich and modern on the one side, the poor and traditional on the other. The new buildings rising on its hills are mostly villas for government officials and American experts. The villages of shanties which surround the city have been built by the people who don't work for the government.

Young King Hussein drives past these shanties when he goes to the mosque. The royal caravan is impressive, about a hundred vehicles in all. The army comes first: one open car after another, six soldiers in each, machine guns ready; the sergeant erect, puffing out his chest despite the mud that splashes into the car. The guards are followed by the royal family, in dozens of cars, interspersed with new army trucks packed with troops, as well as soldiers on motorcycles. After the royal entourage come cabinet ministers, officials of the royal court, and military officers of various kinds. At the end of the caravan, the senior officers, sharp-faced and neatly garbed, ride by in their Fords labeled *Jaish*, army. About a fourth of Jordan's motor vehicles seem to belong to the *Jaish*.

*"El-malik hsan"*—the King is a stallion—a café-owner tells me. "He has courage. And his grandfather, a great man! Do you know what Amman was like when the Emir Abdullah arrived here? Just a village. Look at it now! Do you know Polish? I was in the Polish army for nearly four years. I was a Polish general's boy in Palestine during the war. When I was seventeen I had to join their troops. I fought at Cassino. Later they sent us back to Port Said, and I ran away. I didn't want to leave the Arab countries again. They told me to get officer's training in England for the Jordanian army. But I

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AMERICAN aid to Jordan has given the little kingdom an appearance of stability that may be misleading, this report suggests. JOHANN CASPAR is the pseudonym of an experienced European correspondent in the Middle East.



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didn't want it; the army wasn't a fighting army, just a bunch of guards watching military installations."

The army has established a garrison on the old citadel high over Amman. There one finds Hellenistic temples and fortifications, as well as a castle which may be Omayyad or Byzantine (the *Guide Bleu* has not made up its mind). The citadel has probably been a military installation since the days of King Hanun, who offended David and provoked Joab's destruction of the Ammonites. The new Jordanian garrison has a modern look: the paths between the tents are marked by white-washed stones; trucks are parked in neat rows; electrical cables and antennas set a lively pattern.

"Military life is sweet," says a lieutenant, inviting me into his quarters. His tent is all his own, and well built; low stone walls keep the wind out. He has an elegant uniform, an iron bedstead, a gas stove, and a radio powered by an old auto battery. An orderly brews some tea, and the lieutenant shows me a book he has been reading, written by two army officers. It is an account of Jordanian politics after the expulsion of General Glubb, and discusses the period when Suleiman Nabulsi, an admirer of Nasser, headed Jordan's government. "You won't find this book in the stores," the lieutenant says, "because it contains military information," and takes it from my hands. He is well pleased with his life high above the city; all his needs are taken care of, his pay is excellent by local standards, and he enjoys a privileged standing in the community. He often goes to the movies in Amman, and sometimes travels abroad at army expense. The potential dangers of his job make it seem quite thrilling. He feels necessary and important—at the same time he doesn't have to do much work.

The soldiers are aware that they are part of Jordan's ruling class, and they are proud of it. Officers and men alike do not regret the collapse of the Hashemite federation between Jordan and Iraq that was set up after Syria and Egypt joined in the United Arab Republic in the spring of 1958. "The Iraqi soldiers are only *fellaheen*," one Jordanian officer says. "When they were here, they always caused trouble. It is a good thing they are gone. They did not behave like soldiers."

"Everyone would like to become a soldier," says the boy in my small Arab hotel. "If you get to see the King, will you tell him I want to join the army? Just as a private—that isn't much. Here is my name; he cannot refuse a visitor such a small favor."

"Why can't you go to the recruiting center and enlist?" I ask.

"They wouldn't take me just like that. You need pull to get into the army. Besides, I'm from the wrong side of the Jordan, a refugee from Arab Palestine."

"Why do you want to join the army so badly?"

"Oh, the pay, travel, the uniform. And a soldier is somebody here; I would be able to send some money to my family. Here I work for food and a few tips."

THE men who run Jordan are of two kinds. In one government office, I had occasion to observe both in a single morning. Work starts in this office at about nine, and the head of the bureau arrives early. An elderly man, he greets me graciously on the staircase and is delighted that I speak Arabic. He orders tea for us and his subordinates in the building's large salon. The other officials say little while their elderly superior is talking; they seem quite familiar with the turns his conversation takes.

"People without religion are unworthy, don't you agree?" the old man says. There is polite assent all around the mahogany table. "Let me tell you something: there are people who say that Islam is the only good religion and that one should associate only with Moslems. I don't believe in this. I think that if a Christian sticks to his religion he is a good man, too. You will laugh, but even a Jew, if he sticks to his religion, he is a good man. What does their religion tell them? That they should behave in a moral way. What does yours tell you—the same! You see?"

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The old man expounds his convictions with gusto. They are the liberal ideas that were circulating in the Ottoman Empire when he was young. He scarcely seems to realize that liberalism passed Jordan by long ago. The old man himself reigns, but does not rule, in his office; he spends much of his time greeting visitors. After a while, he leaves our table in order to meet some new dignitary, and the younger men, the technicians, take over the conversation. Among them are an economist who studied in London and an engineer who was graduated from the American University in Beirut.

"The country is calmer than it has been in years," the engineer explains. "Now that the political troubles have stopped, the government is devoting its energy to internal problems. We have begun quite a few new development projects: for example, the East Ghor canal. An American expert who was here told us that our chief asset is our big labor force and its skill in small industrial enterprises." (Expertise is hardly required to make such a statement: the country is full of people without work, and small workshops —two to five employees—are the traditional Levantine form of production.) "The American expert thought that we could reduce unemployment by building new industrial settlements which small entrepreneurs could rent. Trade schools are very important; there are some Germans who want to set them up. Our young people must learn something—not just academic subjects, but something practical, useful."

IT ALL sounds quite positive, but I recall the Jordanian youngster in my hotel who is studying "Aviation Meteorology" under the supervision of a Point Four expert. He sleeps with five others in a single hotel room which is too small to accommodate a desk. In the evening, he sits in the lobby, the meteorology books in his lap, and participates in the general conversation. From time to time, he steals a glance at the book. He knows a few meteorological terms, but not enough English for the simplest ordinary conversation. I saw him excited only once. When the name of Gamal Abdel Nasser was mentioned, the boy's eyes sparkled and he exclaimed: "He is our hero." The others in the lobby—drivers, soldiers, salesmen, all with jobs to protect—shot him warning glances, but the boy could not be repressed. "Our hero," he repeated, "and Arab unity will come!"

"Don't you think," I ask the economist after telling this story, "that this is what will happen to most of your students? Long before they master a trade, they will have learned to shout: 'Arab nationalism! Nasser!'"

"Arab unity has to come," the economist says. "The people want it; it is only a question of when and in what form. We do have faith in Jordan, and we are for gradual change. But Nasser is the symbol of Arab nationalism today. It will come. For you in the West the only question is whether you wish to be for us or against us. You cannot be with Israel and with us at the same time. If you try, we will turn to the East."

This is a familiar form of blackmail. "Perhaps," I respond, "you do not understand how profoundly the West is involved in the existence of Israel. It can never say: 'From now on we are against Israel.'"

"Why not? The influence of the Jews in America and Europe? We know all about that."

I try another tack: "What would you do if the West said to you: 'All right, go Communist, we don't care.'"

"You can't do that. You need our oil, our strategic position."

"We could use Israel as a base; you claim we are doing so already. And the oil is much less essential than the oil companies would like people to think. There are other places with oil. You as an economist should know that the only real loss would be the investments made in previous years."

After long argument, the economist grudgingly admits that he would not really wish his country to go Communist because of Israel. His mood shifts from urbanity to exasperation: "Maybe you are right: it would be bad if the Communists took over the Arab

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countries. But what can we do? It is up to *you* to keep us from going Communist! We have so many troubles and, as you yourself say, whatever we do only makes our position more dangerous. Unemployment is our greatest problem, but as soon as we try to educate our people or find jobs for them, they turn against us. Today it is Nasserism, tomorrow it will be Communism. Nobody helps us. You will see our new Port of Aqaba. We don't even have the money to build a road to the port. The trucks have to bull their way through the desert sands, and we lose thousands of dollars each month because the track ruins the trucks. All our imports come that way."

"What about Nasser? Could he help you out of your troubles?"

"Nasser can't even help himself. He is at the end of his rope."

Thus, even this London-trained economist holds two contradictory sets of ideas. If he encounters difficulties with Arab nationalist notions, he switches to conservative Hashemite ones. The Hashemite ideas provide him with a living; the Nasserist ones give him emotional satisfaction. There is even a hint of a third set. "What about Kassem," I ask, "could he help the Arabs out of their troubles?"

"I don't know much about Kassem, nobody really does. But one thing is sure: the army is the stabilizing factor in all the Arab countries. The officers take power in Egypt, Syria, in the Sudan, and even in Lebanon and here in a disguised way. The same in Iraq. Maybe it doesn't really matter who is at the head, as long as the armies establish conditions of calm."

Had I pointed out the dangers of army rule, I feel sure the economist would have switched to a fourth political theory—democracy, perhaps. He would have told me that this was the one that really represented his deepest convictions—and he would have meant it as much as he did his other professions of faith.

All in all, the life of a Jordanian government employee is rather pleasanter than that of a soldier. Only two things are necessary to qualify for this comparative life of ease: a little schooling and a family that is politically acceptable. With that, any young Jordanian can get himself a desk in one of Amman's large administration buildings and become an important person.

"How do you travel around in foreign countries if you don't work for the government?" the Jordanian bureaucrats all ask me. It takes some explaining. Finally they understand: "He travels around so he can write for a newspaper and he gets money for what he writes." They relax: that man can't be very important, they think—no *wazife*, government job, no importance.

Especially for the junior civil servants, life in government offices is decidedly entertaining. Visitors are always welcome, and official business never seems to interfere with personal chatter which goes on endlessly.

In one office there are some young foreign service officers, just returned from abroad. One has come from Spain, and is showing off his white raincoat, the only one like it in Amman and the butt of numerous envious jokes by his colleagues. "Oh, the girls in Granada," he laughs. "Amman is only a hovel. You have never seen a real city if you only know Amman and Beirut. Next time I go, I will take a car and sell it on the black market. If only they send me again!"

After he leaves, the others talk about him. They find him ridiculous. "Those foreign countries cannot be that wonderful! Still," one of them says, "I would like to be sent abroad, too. Plenty of money and away from my family. An apartment of my own!"

At two o'clock, the employees stop "working" and go home for a long lunch.

How do the Jordanians view America and Britain? Both nations are accused of "colonial exploitation" by Communist and Nasserite propaganda. But the British command the strong personal loyalty of one sector of Jordan's population, the Bedouin army; and there is a deep, if not always justified, admiration for British political "cleverness" among nearly all Jordanians. Relations with America, on the other hand, are dominated

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by Jordan's crying need for U.S. handouts and the desire for more of them; there is never enough.

According to a survey by the World Bank, Jordan could become economically self-sufficient only if a great deal of outside capital and skill were invested. Without even considering the very important human factor, the country would need capital investments of some $330 million, to be fed into Jordan at a steady rate of no less than $33 million a year. In fact, U.S. financial assistance to Jordan since 1956 has averaged $44 million a year, but much of this has gone for military aid and over-all government assistance. The budget for next year earmarks only $16 million for productive development. The budget, announced in April, is a curiously optimistic document. It gives a breakdown of all expenses (of a total of $114 million, $57 million are allotted to defense); it states that there will be a deficit of $22.5 million; but it does not reveal the anticipated income of the state (which in past years was less than $20 million, much less than needed). Jordan could achieve self-sufficiency if it had, or could develop, the necessary human resources, and if it could obtain more than twice as much foreign aid as it receives today. Some $88 million in aid, plus the $20 million the government collects in taxes, would be necessary to fulfill the announced budget for next year—and this would still fall short of the development funds considered necessary by the World Bank.

By commissioning all sorts of development plans, America assumed some responsibility in the eyes of most Jordanians for their execution. The Americans are, in the public mind, the "development people," and they will be blamed if development does not seem satisfactory. The concern of the British, on the other hand, was with the army and with administering the country in a fashion that did not unsettle traditional ways. They came to Jordan as officers, military and administrative; they were able to impress their character upon the people with whom they worked. The Bedouin knows from personal experience that the army worked well, that the administration was fair. The Americans, however, came as technocrats, who were removed from the people but who interfered with their traditional ways. Thus far, few people can see any practical effects of American aid on their own lives. Technical capacity in itself compels admiration among few Arabs: it must be coupled with some sort of "personality" to make a lasting impression. The technocrats, furthermore, work among the very people who are least accessible to their charms—the urban and intellectual groups influenced by Arab nationalism and by Communism.

JORDAN'S relations with her Arab neighbors are even more precarious than those with Britain and America. The frontier with Iraq is still virtually closed. Many Palestinian refugees, who had good jobs in Iraq as skilled workers and who were pro-Nasser, were driven out after the revolution last year—which caused a new wave of bitterness in Jordan. The local press never comments on the rivalry between Nasser and Kassem, but it does carry excerpts of the proceedings of the "people's court" in Baghdad, and it has briefly mentioned some of Nasser's anti-Communist speeches. Generally, the press sticks very close to the government line. Only one foreign Arabic newspaper is available: the expensive Beiruti *Hayat,* which is influential among the upper classes. It gives complete news of the Arab world, is officially "neutral" between Nasser and Kassem, and is very anti-Israel and rather anti-Communist. Its editor is himself a refugee from Palestine, and a capable journalist.

The revolution in Iraq has undoubtedly reduced Nasser's prestige with the Jordanians. Some observers believe that King Hussein will profit from this. They argue that pictures of the King have been seen, for the first time, in the refugee camps. But these pictures are posted only on government premises—police shacks or administrative buildings. Most disappointed Nasserites seem likely to turn to the Communists.

On the government level, the recent installation of Hazza Majali as Prime Minister

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seems to be a way of allowing King Hussein to determine the country's policies on his own; Majali is expected to procure support for the King from the tribes to which he belongs. For the immediate future, Jordan can only continue its balancing act between Egypt and Iraq. The Cairo press received the news of the establishment of the Majali government coolly, the Syrian newspapers angrily. There is thus no reason to expect a Jordanian rapprochement with the UAR. Closer relations with Iraq are even less likely, so long as the Communists play a conspicuous role in Baghdad.

THE trip from Amman to the new port of Aqaba takes about 18 hours. It is a distance of 250 miles, traversed by about 400 enormous trucks which grind their way through the desert day and night. Most of the drivers make the trip alone, with one or two stops for coffee and food. I accompanied one of them.

The driver points to an old railway line. Built in Ottoman days, it originally went to Mecca, but it was wrecked during the desert campaigns of the First World War. Now it carries three trains a week as far as Ras-en-Naqab, just beyond Ma'an.

From time to time we pass the tents of Bedouins. They have heaped brushwork around the windside of their tents. Dressed in heavy fur coats, they shudder in the cold wind. Their animals graze in a wide circle around them. Their dogs run after our truck until the dust is too much for them.

"The Bedouins may look miserable," the driver tells me, "but they have a good life. Nearly all of them get some cash from sons and cousins in the army. They don't need much money and they get what they need. The really hard life is in the villages and on the other side of the Jordan. There they have too many people and no work."

After inspecting the installations in Aqaba, I make my way back to Amman. I spend the last part of the trip with some soldiers. "We have been stationed in Aqaba four years," one of them tells me. "You save a lot of money that way—there is only one movie here and you can't spend money in the desert."

The soldiers are sitting on one side of a baggage car, which has been equipped with two rows of benches along its walls. Opposite the soldiers sit workers and peasants. The workers, who were dismissed from their jobs at Aqaba and are returning to Hebron, stretch their quilts on the floor and lie down to sleep. The soldiers sit upright and do not talk to the workers. Even the soldiers who come from Hebron ignore their fellow townsmen. But they do make room for a blind Bedouin *sha'er*—a bard—who gets on the train at one of the desert stops.

On the Jordan plain, I watch about 850 workers digging the East Ghor canal, which will run parallel to the river. The workers are organized in gangs of twenty; a supervisor watches them. All the digging is by hand, with pushcarts used to move the earth. Four miles of the earthwork have been completed. The government is considering bids for the cementing of the canal.

"The workers," an engineer tells me, "come from 140 different villages. Everywhere they need work, so we take a few workers from each region. They work eight hours and sleep in army tents."

"How much do they earn?" I ask.

"Three hundred *fils* a day by government regulation."

It is difficult to get a meal, even in the simplest street kitchens, for less than 100 *fils*. "Do the workers get their food from you?"

"Oh no. They have to buy their own."

The soldier's wage is about twice that of the worker; but because he is well fed and clothed, he can use almost all his salary for his family or for pocket money. The laborer, on the other hand, must choose between starving himself and starving his family.

In Jordan today there are only two classes, rulers and ruled. As a result of the failure of Nabulsi and his Arab nationalists, the old revolutionary middle classes have been thinned out. The vast majority of the disposable wealth (it is largely U.S. money) is in the hands of the state, which distributes it to its supporters. Those who back the government

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can, with the right sponsorship, join the ruling class, which comprises all government employees from the Prime Minister down to the last army private. They all live at levels which are modest by European standards, but are incomparably higher than that of the mass of the people.

This strict division into a ruling class which owns all the resources and a mass of ruled on the brink of starvation, explains the present "stability" of Jordan. As long as none of the members of the ruling class defect to the side of the masses, the latter are helpless.

The potential danger seems obvious. Once the government tries to develop Jordan's resources, it must lift some of the ruled to a higher station. It must give them incentives, education, better living standards if they are to do the work of a developing country. The uplifting of the masses, however, breeds revolutionaries who will rouse the population against the privileged class, either in the name of Arab nationalism or in the less old-fashioned name of Communism.

The present Jordanian leaders appear to recognize this dilemma. They are not trying to equalize the status of the two classes, but rather are slowly enlarging the numbers of the privileged. This, at any rate, is the policy of the old-line pashas who now head the government. One doubts, however, that it will be continued by the oncoming generation of "technicians," whose minds are filled with European concepts of social justice.

EAST Palestine, the west bank of the Jordan, is preeminently the territory of the ruled. A European social worker in Bethlehem tells me that 18,000 of its 20,000 inhabitants need financial assistance. "It is about the same in Hebron and Nablus. Of the 10 per cent who live well, most are employees of the government or of UNRWA. A few are landowners and professionals, people living off commerce or the tourist trade. These few hate the government most of all, and wait for the revolution."

Jordan is the only Arab country in which the Palestinian refugees are considered full citizens. The inhabitants of the camps are theoretically free to settle wherever they can, and to work wherever they can find employment. In fact, 380,000 of the refugees live outside the camps—in shelters around the big towns, with relatives, etc. Meanwhile, the population of Jordan's 25 refugee camps has increased in the last eight years from 110,000 persons to 180,000.

In theory, refugees who find work must give up their ration cards. In practice, this happens only if the refugee finds a very good job—with an oil company or with the government, for example. Unemployment is widespread among both the indigenous and the refugee population. About 45,000 agricultural workers among the refugees and about 42,000 of the indigenous peasants are totally unemployed, while 60,000 refugees and 14,000 villagers find only partial employment. (The total agricultural work force is estimated to be about 300,000.) Among the urban workers, the situation is no better; 22,000 refugees and 14,000 "Jordanians" are unemployed, while 17,000 refugees and 5,000 "Jordanians" are only partially employed. (The total urban labor force is about 116,000.)

Complaints by the workers that "the refugees compete unfairly and drive us out of our jobs" are frequently heard in Amman. In fact the refugees, who receive UNRWA food rations for themselves and their families, frequently do accept lower wages than the native workers. Refugee registration and ration cards are controlled by refugee employees of UNRWA under the supervision of a few international functionaries. They are not very strict. Refugees are supposed to collect their rations once a month at the distribution centers where they first registered. Many of them, who moved away to work or for some other reason, return monthly to collect their rations. There is also a black market in ration books; some individuals are said to have bought as many as sixty ration books from fellow refugees who no longer need them or from families of deceased persons who have managed to keep the death hidden. They have enough pull to

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collect all the rations and sell them on the free market. They thus evade Jordanian import duties, since the UNRWA imports are duty free.

In West Jordan, Israel is close at hand. The other side of the armistice line is visible from many places. Government officials continue to speak of "occupied Palestine." The numerous refugees continue to talk about what they lost. In their high voices, school children in the refugee camps sing pitiful songs promising their future return to Palestine and furious songs anticipating their future victory over "the Jews."

Nevertheless, Israel's very closeness compels a minimum of realism. To the Jordanians, Israel is a real country with hills they can see, that they once climbed, even if they are inhabited now by "bad Jews." Seen from Damascus, Cairo, or even peaceful Beirut, on the other hand, Israel is only an abstraction: the embodiment of all hatreds, the symbol of one's humiliations as an Arab. Even the stories of Israeli mistreatment of Arab minorities which are circulated in Jordan have a more realistic ring than the corresponding rumors in the *souks* of Damascus and Cairo. In Damascus, for example, they will tell you of tortures and rapes. In Jordan, people complain: "My uncle who stayed on back home has been forced from his land." Or they tell you about "discrimination" at the university: "They didn't allow me to study medicine in Jerusalem, so I came over the frontier and will go to Cairo." Or they talk about the Israeli military regime in Arab frontier villages, about lost law suits against the government, or being forced to speak Hebrew. Or they say: "The Communists are the only party to defend the interests of the Arab minority in Palestine."

This little trickle of gossip leaking through the closed frontiers is virtually Jordan's only link with its neighbor. There is one other, the Israeli radio, which is listened to by many Jordanians (and Lebanese) because it provides fuller coverage of Middle Eastern news than their own stations. The high walls that close in the Old City of Jerusalem, so as to give its Arab inhabitants as few glimpses as possible of the life on the Israeli side, are symbolic. In Jordan, as the country stands today, no force in sight seems likely to remove them.

## MOUNTAIN, FIRE, THORNBUSH

### HARVEY SHAPIRO

How everything gets tamed.
The pronominal outcry, as if uttered in ecstasy,
Is turned to syntax. We are
Only a step from discursive prose
When the voice speaks from the thornbush.
Mountain, fire, and thornbush.
Supplied only with these, even that aniconic Jew
Could spell mystery. But there must be
Narrative. The people must get to the mountain.
Doors must open and close.
How to savor the savagery of Egyptians,
Who betrayed the names of their gods
To demons, and tore the hair
From their godheads
As lotus blossoms are pulled out of the pool.

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HARVEY SHAPIRO last appeared in COMMENTARY with the poem "A Dream of Life" (August 1957). His collection, "The Book and Other Poems," was published in 1955.

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# POLAND'S PECULIAR DICTATORSHIP

## *Gomulka Between Popular Feeling and Soviet Power*

**LUCJAN BLIT**

WHEN I visited Poland in December 1956, its atmosphere was electric with hopes and fears, uncertainties and expectations. For most of the seventy or eighty thousand Jews still remaining in the country at the time, it is true, there were more fears than hopes. But for the millions of Poles, it seemed that a new epoch of freedom, both individual and national, had dawned. Poets and writers expressed the nation's feelings in a language once again vivid and vital. Students again laid enthusiastic claim to being the heirs to the national traditions of freedom. The peasants, still the biggest and most powerful social group in Poland, shook off the nightmare of the Soviet-style kolkhoz. And the workers plunged energetically into erecting a network of factory councils, believing that they had at last found the way to industrial democracy. The Church, the spiritual home of 90 per cent of Poland's population, at one stroke regained not only her old prestige, but most of her extensive privileges, of which the most important was the teaching of the catechism in virtually all the state schools. But above all one felt then that a nation with a heroic and sad history had, under incredibly disadvantageous political and geographical circumstances, fought and won a victory for freedom against one of the greatest power concentrations known to human history.

That was Poland after the "springtime in October" of 1956. How is it now, in 1959? Has the country lost everything it won in its brief period of freedom? Or has the Gomulka regime established a new type of Communist state in which party dictatorship is able to march more or less hand in hand with individual freedom?

And what about the Polish Jews? Have they taken advantage of the much more liberal emigration policy of the present Polish regime and all left the country? Or have some stayed, making up their minds to stick it out, to prolong, even if only to a tiny extent, the long, often painful, but also proud history of Polish Jewry?

I tried to find the answers to these questions when I went to Poland once again this past spring.

I FLEW into the Warsaw airport on March 3. The main purpose of my trip was to report to my papers on the congress of the Communist party (Polish United Workers' party) which was scheduled to start a week later. What struck me at once during the ten-kilometer drive to the Bristol Hotel, situated at the heart of Warsaw, was the complete absence of any outward sign that the first congress since 1954 of Poland's sole political party was about to begin. Since that time the Stalin myth, built on so much suffering and terror, had crumbled throughout the whole eastern empire, and in Poland more than anywhere else. The Polish "bloodless revolution" in the autumn of 1956 had brought to power Communist victims of the former regime, with Wladyslaw Gomulka at their head. Among other things, the congress about to take place had the task of legalizing the near-coup of October 1956. It was also meant to demonstrate how securely established the new leadership was among the party's activists. And, of course, a party congress would

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POLAND'S non-terroristic Communist dictatorship is analyzed here by LUCJAN BLIT, a Warsaw-born journalist who has been living in England since World War II. Mr. Blit contributed two previous reports to COMMENTARY: "Poland and the Jewish Remnant" (March 1957) and "Poland's Year of Change" (October 1957).



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serve as the forum for important statements on the country's political, economic, and cultural developments.

Under the Communist system, a party congress is always the occasion for a great outburst of propaganda, as well as a kind of political entertainment. But there were neither flags nor slogans, nor anything else to catch the eye of the people hurrying through the city's streets, to remind them that an important chapter in the national history was being written. I did see one large poster, the day I arrived. It bore a picture of Sholem Aleichem, and announced, in Polish and in Yiddish, a meeting to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

The people themselves showed, so far as I could see, not even a flicker of spontaneous interest in the Communist party congress during the whole nine days it was in session. On the morning of the third day, I went to watch the men who rule Poland drive up to the entrance of the Palace of Culture, where the congress was being held. Hundreds of people passed by on the sidewalks opposite the palace. I was the only one—except for the police—who stood and watched Gomulka and the others alight from their powerful black Mercedes automobiles. Not one public demonstration or meeting of any kind was scheduled, during the period of the congress, that would have made it possible for the Warsaw population to participate, even passively, in what was after all an event of some political significance. I left Poland ten days after the end of the congress. Everybody was busy then—not with politics but with preparations for Easter. All the churches, of which there are many, were filled to overflowing.

How explain this strange phenomenon of a Communist party not seizing an obvious opportunity for a self-glorifying political demonstration? The party has, after all, not only the power but the whole state apparatus at its command to assemble the people and make them listen to its propaganda. Why did not Gomulka show his visitors right then and there that he, among all possible Communist dictators, is the most acceptable to the non-Communist-minded people of Poland? Why did he (personally, as I was informed) decide against allowing the presence of the foreign non-Communist journalists at the congress, even for a single hour, though he knew that they had come especially to report on the congress, and that whatever he had to say about Poland's present and future policies would consequently get a very much diminished coverage in the world press? To explain it, as some highly placed Communists did to me, only as a part of Gomulka's inherently conservative disposition, his shyness whenever he is confronted with people in the flesh, is, in my opinion, to misunderstand the Polish leader and underestimate his powers as shrewd tactician.

However uninspired in its details, the congress was motivated by a single underlying idea: to draw a curtain between the stormy days of October 1956 and the country's present political apathy. There were nine days of endless speech-making, but not once any mention of the time, little more than two years ago, when a manifesto was in print, ready at an hour's notice to be distributed through the streets of Warsaw and broadcast over the radio, calling on the Poles to resist by every means any external interference in the affairs of their nation. That was the day when Soviet tanks were taking up positions in the suburbs of Warsaw, Poznan, and Cracow, when Soviet divisions based in Eastern Germany crossed the Polish frontiers, and when a Soviet plane landed on Warsaw's military airport, depositing on Polish soil the substantial figures of Khrushchev, Molotov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, and Marshal Konev. Nobody at the congress was moved to recall that terrible moment when the threat of a massacre hung over the Poles, potentially ten times as bloody as the one which a few weeks later was to strike their cousins the Hungarians. Neither did anybody trouble to repeat Gomulka's stern indictment of the former regime for having created an economic situation which had brought starvation to the towns, and such general misery that to protest against it hundreds of Poznan workers in 1956

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paid with their lives. Not a word was uttered about the terror of the infamous security police, of which Gomulka and his wife and their friends were themselves among the victims. Nor did Gomulka or any of his friends, despite the well-known Communist passion for such academic argument, take the occasion to defend their purity of political practice and theory, which had so often been attacked by Communists in high places. (Who can tell whether, at some time in the future, the same accusations, privately still repeated by the Czechs, the East Germans, and the Bulgarians, will not become the basis of a new inquisition?) For the moment, Jerzy Morawski, Gomulka's young lieutenant, was delegated to pass over these fateful events with the simple remark that "there was a misunderstanding on the question of a right deviation in the party. . . ."

When Adam Wazyk wrote his now famous "Poem for Adults" in 1955, he prayed "for the bread of truth." Returning to power in October 1956, on a wave of revolutionary and national enthusiasm, Gomulka promised to tell nothing but the truth—no matter how bitter. In the first months he kept his promise. But he soon discovered that even his Communist regime, however more liberal, could survive in Poland only if the long arm of Soviet might were permanently to deprive the Poles of their freedom of decision. This is the greatest of all the truths about the Polish situation, and Gomulka uttered it once only, on the eve of the election (January 20, 1957) that returned him to power in defiance of the leadership of the other Communist countries, and against the opposition of the Polish party apparatus. He said then: "To cross out Communist candidates is to cross Poland off the map of European states." Gomulka no longer dares speak that truth. His six-hour opening address on the first day of the congress was full of half-truths—and some out-and-out lies too obvious to be believed even by party members.

Gomulka is far from being an intellectual giant. The Western world is a closed book to him. But he knows his people. He knows that he has lost the active support of the majority of the Polish nation, which was his for the asking in the autumn of 1956 and the months that followed. It was bound to be. Gomulka's bridge to the people was the liberal intellectuals of his own party—writers, university teachers, journalists. They saw in the events of October the first great step in the direction of a social democratic regime, and in this vision they were supported by an enthusiastic, revolutionary-minded student youth. Then, too, the most enlightened among the workers longed for the rebirth of independent trade unions, and a chance for active participation in running the state-owned factories. All these elements hoped, above all, for an end to the Communist party dictatorship.

Gomulka, to save that dictatorship, had to crush these hopes. He had to discard his allies of 1956, and seek support in the only organization that would give it to a Communist leader, the narrow, reactionary, and often brutal party apparatus. Gomulka understood where he had to turn to get the levers of his power—and he did what he had to do. But in so doing, he blocked most of his channels of communication not only with the country as a whole, but also with the non-Communist forces in Poland that are socially and politically radical. Gomulka is aware of his present isolation. But Gomulka is a fanatical Communist. And—as I was told by one of his political associates—Gomulka believes his is a dictatorship of the proletariat which will in years to come mold a new generation that will share his political and economic ideas.

But if Gomulka is determined not to give up power or share it with anyone, left or right, neither does he want any return to the former regime of fear and terror. If he cannot win the active support of any considerable group of the population, if the overwhelming majority are anti-Communist, then let them be politically uninterested, inert, even if it means complete indifference to what he, Gomulka, proclaims to be in their interest. This explains the absence of the slightest effort of the regime to make the people—or even just the people of Warsaw—take any

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notice of what the fifteen hundred men and women gathered at the Palace of Culture were doing or saying.

National apathy is the condition for a non-terroristic Communist regime in Poland.

Every authoritarian regime thrives on a perverted complex of masochism. It is bound to feel the presence of enemies everywhere—inside its own garrison and outside the citadel. Fear thus becomes the moral basis for dictatorship, for intellectual terror, and for the material corruption which keeps spreading among the top ruling clique. At the congress, Gomulka attacked three main enemies. The enemy inside the party are the "revisionists, poisoned with social democratic ideas." Outside, among the citizenry, the enemy is the Roman Catholic Church. And in the world at large the enemy is, of course, the capitalist imperialists—of which the U.S. remains the obvious symbol, and Western Germany the spearhead.

In fairness to Gomulka, one must point out that these fixations of his are not altogether a matter of charging into windmills. During my twenty-four days in Poland I conversed—sometimes intimately—with dozens of party members of high standing. If I say that out of these only *one,* an editor of an important party newspaper, was a 100 per cent totally dedicated Communist, it may sound unbelievable. It is a fact. The party members whom I spoke to, men and women, were activists—journalists, political workers, civil servants, writers. All of them belonged to Gomulka's "internal" enemy. They were revisionists, people longing for a system that would harmoniously unite the economic needs of a country going through the processes of industrialization, with the aims of social justice and political and individual freedom. The fact that I am a member of the British Labor party gave rise, on every occasion it was mentioned, to genuine and sometimes moving expressions of sympathy—I particularly recall one such incident in the office of the Workers' Council of Zeran, the country's largest automobile factory. There I was told that "while we [in Poland] talk about workers' rights and welfare, in Britain and in the Scandinavian countries they have been achieved." It is true that at this moment there exists no organized revisionist wing in the party itself; but aside from the paid members of the party apparatus (there are about 10,000 of them) the intellectually alive members are as revisionist as they ever were.

The Church continues to be very strong among the peasants, and of course still has a good deal of influence in the towns. I was informed by one of the leading Catholic writers (one of the nine Znak deputies in the Sejm) that in his opinion the head of the Polish Church, Cardinal Wyszynski, underestimates the growth of agnosticism, which is everywhere the natural companion of urban life. It is still true that the majority of the Polish students are loyal to the Church—but not 100 per cent. The workers, who only yesterday as peasant boys and girls attended church services every Sunday, have become less regular churchgoers now. On the other hand there has taken place among the Catholic intellectuals a significant liberal turn, clearly evident in the few periodicals they are allowed to print. My half-day visit to the Cracow office of their weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny,* convinced me that the once monolithic and "Spanish" Polish Catholic Church now has a strong liberal "revisionist" wing of its own. This includes not only lay Catholic intelligentsia, but also influential bishops, and is looked upon with friendly tolerance by Cardinal Wyszynski. I venture to say that the prospect for the emergence of a liberal Poland on the day that authoritarian rule ceases to exist in Eastern Europe is now probably better than ever before.

How do the remnants of Polish Jewry fit into this complex political, economic, and intellectual scene?

The first thing that must be noted is that while the Jewish emigration is undeniably slowing down, it still continues. Many of my Jewish friends, whom I saw and spoke to in the winter of 1956, were no longer there on my second visit. Together with their families, they had left the country.

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There are no exact figures available for the number of Jews who have emigrated in the last thirty months, or for those who are still in Poland. During this period some fourteen or fifteen thousand Jews, I was told, have returned to Poland from Soviet Russia. No less than eleven thousand of these repatriates went on farther—to Israel, to South America, to Western Europe and Australia. If they were able to leave Soviet Russia at all, it was because the Polish government had insisted, in the face of Russian resistance, on having included in the repatriation treaty paragraph 19, which granted Jews who could claim Polish citizenship as of August 1939 the right to return to Poland (a right denied to Ukrainians, Belorussians, and other non-Catholic former Polish citizens). But the majority of these Jews had ceased to have any ties with the Poland that emerged after 1945. It is not likely that more than a few of the four thousand Jewish repatriates who are still in Poland will make their permanent home there.

There are, in addition, some thirty-five thousand Jews who either never left Poland (surviving the Nazi occupation by hiding or assuming a non-Jewish identity), or who returned to Poland immediately after the war from exile and camps in Soviet Russia or in Germany. Some came back from France, Britain, and other Western countries—mainly they were of extreme left-wing persuasion. Many of these latter Jews are completely Polonized and bring up their children as straight Poles (though minus the Roman Catholicism). When the Stalinists in Poland reverted to outright anti-Semitism, in 1954, 1955, and 1956, and purged the Jews from the army, the higher civil service, the economic life, and the party apparatus, many of the completely Polonized and fellow-traveling Jews experienced a painful psychological shock. By the end of 1956 they were the most panic-stricken members of the whole Jewish community. A great many of them left for Israel—though it would seem that they are not entirely happy there, according to the letters I have seen written by them to friends in Poland. Recently, the exodus of this group from Poland has largely been stopped, one of the reasons being the new policy of the government in refusing foreign passports to those who have worked in secret state establishments (police, army, defense production) during the last two years.

Yet when the Association of Polish Journalists gave a reception for the foreign journalists who were in Warsaw to report on the party congress, the percentage of Jews among our hosts was considerable. Jews are certainly prominent on the staff of *Trybuna Ludu*, the party's central organ. They are also quite numerous still in the higher strata of the civil service (heads of departments, etc.) and in the industrial management group; there are still many Jewish poets and writers, and at some universities a substantial number of the sociologists and economists are Jews.

In the party itself, there can be no doubt that the percentage of Jews, especially in the top leadership, has very much diminished during the last two or three years. At the congress there were Jews in the party delegations from Warsaw, Lodz, Cracow, Kielce, and some other districts, and one of the four main speeches was made by Roman Zambrowski, who is a Jew. Apart from him, however, among the more than eighty speakers who participated in the debates at the congress (these were not real debates, but simply prepared and censored statements of loyalty to the party line) only one, as far as I could make out, was a Jew.

A FEW weeks before the delegates to the congress assembled, an anti-Semitic leaflet, produced on a hectograph, circulated among the party activists, especially in and around Warsaw. I did not see it, but was told about it by three separate delegates. It was signed by an anonymous "honest delegate," and its authors, according to my informants, belong to a group of Polish Stalinists whose leader until very recently was a certain Pawlak, the former secretary of the Warsaw County party organization, who was removed from his post by Gomulka. The leaflet called on party members to elect as delegates to the congress "trustworthy comrades" who would defend the regime against "imperialist

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agents." It urged also that they should not vote for Jews, or members with Jewish wives. Zofia Gomulka is of Jewish origin, and so are the wives of several other prominent party leaders. The leaflet was branded by party members of my acquaintance as a foolish product of extreme Polish Stalinists, who are suspected, by the way, of being employees of a secret Soviet state organization. Jewish party members, on the other hand, assured me there are no indications of anti-Semitism inside the party. The fact that Zambrowski, the only Jew elected to the party's Politburo, received one of the lowest votes, need not necessarily be taken as any proof of latent anti-Semitism. He also happens to be one of the less attractive and less popular personalities among the Polish Communist leaders.

Among the thirty-five thousand more or less settled Jews remaining in Poland, only a very small proportion belong to the already assimilated and privileged group of those who earn a good living. The majority are workers, artisans belonging to cooperatives, small government employees, teachers, etc. One task this larger community has set itself is to insure the survival of what is left of the Yiddish cultural tradition in Poland. The government, I was told, is very generous in helping toward this end, with contributions of money, accommodations, etc. I have already mentioned the nationwide Sholem Aleichem festivities which, organized by mixed Polish-Jewish committees, were government-subsidized. The Yiddish State Theater receives a government subsidy of three to four million zlotys yearly. Another four million zlotys (roughly $160,000) yearly of state subsidy goes to the Jewish "Cultural Association" (Communist-controlled) which, among other activities, maintains clubs in twenty-six towns where there are Jewish communities, and has published between fifteen and twenty books in Yiddish every year; it has close to three thousand subscribers.

The community, of course, continues to receive help from international Jewish organizations. The Joint Distribution Committee, active once again since 1957, is helping to recreate a Jewish cooperative movement in Poland—twelve such cooperatives are already in existence. The ORT has been doing a very good job, teaching new trades to the Jewish repatriates from Soviet Russia, or to those Polish Jews who lost their jobs as army officers or civil servants and have to make their living in some other way.

Generally, I was assured by the Jews I talked to (including some Israeli diplomats) that there is no overt anti-Semitism at the present time in Poland. I myself saw no signs of any during my stay there. Yet I was also informed that most of the Jews, and especially those who live outside Warsaw, are going ahead with plans to emigrate. Some two to three hundred Jews leave Poland every month.

Poland in the spring of 1959 was much less exhilarating than Poland in the closing months of 1956. There was less freedom to publish unorthodox opinions, and political apathy had replaced enthusiasm. Yet it is still a country where the severest critique of Communism can be openly voiced—and applauded—without fear of the consequences.

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# MUST THE WEST DEPEND ON MIDEAST OIL?

## *Petroleum Supply and the National Security*

**OSCAR GASS**

THE United States need never, at any time we can now foresee, yield to economic or political pressure from any nation because of dependence on foreign petroleum supplies. We are not so dependent today, and need not be at any time in the 20th century. For a remoter time, we cannot now make rational provision. We shall then increasingly have other energy sources—and other problems.

Were the North American continent not so completely independent of imported oil, the United States would not today be a true world super-power. Among the other nations that pretend to world power, only the USSR has a comparable independence. When the 20th century opened, Russia was producing more than half of the world's crude oil. Recently the Russians have announced that their 1975 goal is 8,000,000 barrels per day. It is perhaps no mere coincidence that this target can be described fairly accurately, in the year 1959, as "more than is being produced by the United States."

In the continental United States, about 37 billion barrels of oil and natural gas liquids are now "proven." (To "prove" reserves means, in the language of the oil industry, to establish the quantity in a field that can be raised to the surface by methods now economical.) The oil industry proves reserves as it needs them; the 37 billion of today compares with about 19 billion in 1940. We are now using somewhat less than 3 billion barrels of our reserves annually, compared with about 1½ billion in 1940.

But the proven supply is only our ready inventory. Reasoned professional judgment (as expressed recently, for example, by the president of Humble Oil) suggests that the oil fields *now* known and lands *now* under lease for oil extraction will probably add another 70 billion barrels of oil to proven supply in the United States, as these lands are worked over during the next twenty years. That makes a fairly reliable total of about 105 billion barrels. One serious student, B. C. Netschert, has recently speculated that if one reckons on fields not now known, there may be 500 billion barrels of crude oil potentially available for recovery in the United States—provision for a century and a half at the present rate of consumption (which however has doubled about every twenty years). Much depends on the technique of recovery; present forecasts are based on the premise that we will leave 70 per cent of the oil in the ground permanently and succeed in bringing only 30 per cent to the surface.

Moreover, the United States has even larger reserves of oil shales than of liquid petroleum. Known shale deposits in the western part of the United States contain more than 600 billion barrels of recoverable hydrocarbon liquids. A substantial part of this "shale oil" is recoverable now, at a cost level entirely competitive with domestic crude production. One major West Coast oil company, after extensive pilot plant work, announced that extraction of oil from shales is inhibited only by the availability of cheaper imported crude. These shales constitute reserves for the remoter future. Their existence makes

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AMERICAN policy toward the Middle East, and Western policy in general, we have been assured for years, must base itself on the central, stubborn foil of our dependence on Middle East oil. But, OSCAR GASS asks: Is this so? "The United States and the Poorest Peoples" (February 1958) and "Four Books on Israel" (July 1958) were previously contributed by Mr. Gass, who is a consulting economist in private practice in Washington, D.C.



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it impossible that the United States should ever find itself suddenly "out of oil."

Large increases in domestic oil production are feasible without substantially higher costs. Our total demand for petroleum is now about 9¾ million barrels daily. This is equivalent to about 2¼ gallons daily for every person in the United States. At the beginning of 1959 we were importing about one-fifth of our requirements; the imported supplies had the advantages of being cheap and of coming, for the most part, from friendly, reliable countries. But these imports were merely a convenience. The Mandatory Import Program proclaimed on March 10, 1959 will have the effect of reducing imports to about 15 per cent of total requirements. That imposes no hardship. The United States was producing about 8,000,000 barrels daily of crude petroleum and natural gas liquids at the beginning of 1959. There was idle crude capacity of 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 barrels per day. It would certainly be cheaper, per barrel, to produce 9,000,000 barrels domestically, and it might be even cheaper, on the average, to produce 10,000,000 barrels—if we could use that much. Our average domestic crude production cost would fall with such expansion of output, though the additional crude would still cost more than equivalent imports.

In making longer-run comparisons of costs, we must first eliminate the influence of general increases in the price level. Then we can recognize a real factor of increasing crude oil costs in deeper drilling, but also offsetting factors in improved finding techniques, better equipment, better materials, and greater knowledge of reservoir recovery. On balance, the real cost trend is certainly not sharply upward. In real terms, we can count, over the years, on greatly increased petroleum supplies from domestic production, at costs comparable to those with which we are accustomed.

So far as American petroleum consumption is concerned, we need not—for reasons of quantity or cost—look to the Middle East, or to Latin America, or to any other place in the world.

## II

The petroleum position of the major allies of the United States is, with few exceptions, the exact opposite of our own.

The Americas, without the United States, can more than take care of their own petroleum needs, as a group. They now produce over 4,000,000 barrels of crude daily and could easily achieve 6,000,000, if we made that a common goal. As a group they now have an exportable surplus of 2,000,000 barrels. Venezuela is today their one great net exporter, but other countries—notably Canada, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina—could more than meet their own needs if their resources were developed.

On the other hand, Western Europe (not including Austria) and North Africa (apart from Egypt) together have today only a trifling crude oil production—under 250,000 barrels daily. Western Europe itself needs twelve times as much. America's position with respect to petroleum supply therefore contrasts sharply with Western Europe's—absolute independence in our case, absolute dependence in theirs.

Apart from Europe (and after the Americas), in all the rest of what we euphemistically call the free world, only the Middle East and the Indonesian archipelago have oil production in quantities worth mentioning—4½ million and ½ million barrels daily, respectively. Asia (outside the Communist countries), Africa, and Oceania together now consume over 1½ million barrels of oil daily—half the amount of Western Europe—but most of the countries in these three continents have no considerable oil. Countries like Japan and Australia are as dependent on imports as are the United Kingdom or Belgium. In fact, all our major allies and associates outside the Americas are primarily dependent, for petroleum supply, on the Middle East, and they are becoming more dependent with every year.

Here is the nub of the issue of national and international security in petroleum supply. For some decades certainly, we and our allies and associates will need increasing supplies of petroleum, both for general eco-

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nomic growth and for specific defense use. For the United States alone, imports from all Asia do not come to 5 per cent of total use. This share is trifling; we could do without it. But our allies and associates are in a very different position. Is it right that they should become so dependent on Middle East oil? From the point of view of cost, Middle East oil is extremely attractive; less than 1,000 wells there (in contrast to over 600,000 in the United States) have served to "prove" reserves five times as great as those in the United States. But can we afford to make immediate cheapness the determining consideration? Is it wise for us to stake our mutual security on success in making the Middle East a safe source of supply? If not, what must we do?

## III

THE petroleum position of the nations allied or associated with us is the weaker because they are characteristically less able than the United States to forego a substantial fraction of their petroleum consumption. They have fewer substitutes and their oil uses cut closer to the bone.

In the United States today, petroleum is indispensable only for internal combustion engines and lubricants. Gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel, and lubricants are the petroleum products for which we have no easy substitutes. Furnace oil, residual fuel oil, and other petroleum fractions are only conveniences which we could do without, if petroleum became really scarce. The petro-chemical industry could use natural gas and coal derivatives, though sometimes with a decided cost disadvantage. So far as furnace oil is concerned, natural gas is cleaner and easier to handle, and is increasingly displacing oil in any case. So far as residual fuel oil is concerned, we have enough coal to displace it entirely and at a cost differential that is minor, in the perspective of any national necessity. The total elimination of petroleum, as a fuel, from power generation need not raise our national electricity bill by one per cent. But these substitutions, which are feasible for the United States in a long period adjustment, are not possible for our principal allies.

During the past dozen years, the United States energy position has been relieved by gigantic expansion in natural gas output to a level supplying about as much energy as coal does. (There is more energy in our "proven" reserves of natural gas than in our "proven" oil.) We now move gas across the continent in the world's largest pipelines, and we shall soon move it across the waters in refrigerated ships. This natural gas expansion has been supplemented by progress in mechanizing coal mining, which opens up a vista of decades of expansion in coal supplies for power production at relatively constant real costs. American electricity will be increasingly based on coal until nuclear power becomes important.

Nothing comparable has happened—or is to be anticipated—in Western Europe. Europe finds it necessary to import some coal, to import materials for nuclear fuels, and—most important for the next decades—to import steadily increasing volumes of petroleum. Whatever strikes at this petroleum flow, strikes at the standard of living of the Western European peoples and at the stability of their public life. This was the deeper significance of the Suez conflict.

For the next decades, Western European economic growth will depend on the ability to import increasing volumes of fuel at costs that do not absorb the gain from advancing industrial productivity. In 1955 about 20 per cent of Western European energy supply was derived from imported fuels. It was then authoritatively estimated that by 1975 the share would be in the neighborhood of 40 per cent. Western Europe needs petroleum not only for internal combustion engines and lubricants, but also for heat and power; unlike the United States, it has no economical substitutes for oil. In 1947 the region imported about ¾ million barrels of petroleum per day and in 1955 about 1¾ million barrels. It was believed that the quantity of petroleum imports would rise to about 3,000,000 barrels a day in 1960 and roughly 6,000,000 barrels in 1975. As two-

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thirds of the known reserves of petroleum are in the Middle East, it was naturally assumed, before the Suez crisis, that most of this increased import would come from the Middle East.

Middle East oil has a special significance for European supply because of the substantial European ownership interest, supplemented by special supply arrangements, in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar. Much Middle East oil therefore comes to Western Europe with a smaller balance of payments burden than when oil is purchased from the United States or Canada, where Western European ownership now amounts to only about 5 per cent of total oil production. It is not therefore a simple matter, quite apart from the large quantities involved, to recommend to the Western European nations that they take steps to diminish their dependence on the Middle East and to increase their supply from Canada and the United States. Even the substitution of Latin America is not easy, though there European interests own about 30 per cent of total output.

Substitution of supply sources in the Americas would require far-reaching planning among allies and perhaps extensive financial assistance from the ally most capable of giving it. The reward of so comprehensive and expensive an effort might, however, be a cementing and stabilizing of the Western alliance in a way that comes only from prevision of fundamental problems, imagination in proposing solutions, and community in sharing their burdens.

## IV

Oil men of the 1930's borrowed from the underworld a peculiarly apt phrase: certain oil was "hot." Produced in defiance of state regulations, this oil sought markets anywhere, had to be sold quickly, and was frequently "dumped" without regard to price. The late 1950's have their own "hot" oil. The temperature comes from several elements, experienced or feared; renegotiation of agreements under duress; stoppage of transit; riot and destruction of facilities; confiscation; the Communist presence. Produce and sell today; there may be no tomorrow.

Before the Suez crisis, "outsiders," purchasing at posted prices, could not derive any particular advantage from moving Middle East crude to the Western hemisphere. With Suez came a sharp change. The great world petroleum price leaders took the occasion to raise Western hemisphere crude prices by 25 to 50 cents a barrel. (The Independent Petroleum Association of America estimates the average 1956-57 rise at 32¢.) There have been subsequent reductions, but characteristically, in the United States, about two-thirds of the Suez crisis price increase survived into March 1959. One important specification, East Texas crude, has held its high of $3.25 a barrel. At the same time, the price leaders expanded the marketing area and volume of their Middle East production so as to utilize those reserves more rapidly. Crude postings were raised only about 18¢, and sales below posted prices multiplied. Then the initial price increase was formally reversed. Now even posted prices in the Middle East are uniformly *below* pre-Suez values. The Abadan posting, which was $1.86 per barrel before Suez, is now $1.81; the Kuwait quotation of $1.72 is now $1.67; these are representative. Meanwhile tanker rates have fallen to unprecedented lows. The consequence of these divergent crude price policies (supplemented by the tanker situation) is that Middle East oil is cheapest everywhere. It is cheaper in Montreal and Vancouver than Canadian oil, cheaper in Houston than the oil of Texas, cheaper in Los Angeles than the oil of California. The heat is on.

It would be gambling recklessly with the national security to base international petroleum policy on a confident judgment that the tensions which produced the heat are gradually diminishing. If we focus on the Middle East countries important in world petroleum supply, excluding Turkey and Israel (who have no significant oil production and are not now important even in oil transit), we shall find no basis for optimism. Few large areas of the world are so pulverized socially, so meagerly endowed with

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popular skills and crafts, so far from being habituated to the technology and organization of modern enterprise. Perhaps nowhere in the world has government been more a matter of apathy, force, and fear. Abject poverty renders active citizenship unattainable for the masses. There is no traditional aristocracy, with rights of its own that the state need respect. Private enterprise is a poor thing; it grows up in the shadow of the state, assisted by the state's financing, aided by special privileges, and subject to direction and exploitation by the state and the state's officials. Parliamentary institutions and political democracy alike have little meaning. Military officers hold primary leadership, but in cooperation with nationalist civil officials. This pattern of government and society finds sanction in an authoritarian tradition far older than Marxism.

The great powers of the West were once the natural enemies of Middle Eastern nationalisms because they held dominion and property in the Middle East. Today, the West still has something worth taking, property, and especially oil property. Only in Turkey and Iran did the Russians arouse equal or greater enmity. Soviet Communism had nothing in the Middle East that the native nationalisms could aspire to take.

It would be unwise to comfort ourselves with the idea of a community of interest between Middle Eastern oil producing countries and world consumers. There is the usual community between buyers and sellers in having business done—but there is also the usual diversity over the benefits to be divided. The Middle Eastern countries will unquestionably continue to claim an ever larger share of the benefits from petroleum use, and in the last analysis—if there is no alternative—world consumers (rather than merely oil company profits) will have to carry the additional burden. The professed 50/50 sharing of profits is now being challenged by various 75/25 formulas, and beyond these lie proposed 90/10 formulas. The limit of this progression lies not in any notion of equity; what is at issue is the strength of the contending parties and the extent to which they need one another. The situation is made especially tense by the fact that Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Bahrein are the major suppliers, but it is the United Arab Republic which controls all the major economical lines of transit to the west, both by water and land. In addition to the denial of original supply, therefore, the denial of petroleum transit becomes a method of negotiation. Under these circumstances, any petroleum agreement must be regarded as being an agreement merely "for the time" until the Middle Eastern party considers it feasible to overturn it in favor of another regarded as more beneficial.

## V

NEED world consumers then forego entirely the use of Middle East oil? Not at all. Middle East petroleum output can perhaps even safely continue to grow from the present level of 4½ million barrels daily to as much as 7 or 8 million barrels by 1970. What seems incompatible with reasonable security is to meet every increase in free world demand by expanding Middle East supply; to perpetuate the extreme dependence of Western Europe and the Western Pacific on the Middle East; to flood all markets with Middle East oil; thereby gradually to undermine the adequacy of oil industries in more secure areas; and thus to make the instability of Middle Eastern oil titles a stepping-stone to general insecurity in world petroleum supply.

The world outside the Communist bloc now produces over 17 million barrels daily of crude petroleum and natural gas liquids. Consumption is rising rapidly, and particularly so outside the United States. While United States domestic consumption may reasonably be expected to be 3 to 4 million barrels per day higher in 1970, other consumption is likely to be 5 to 6 million higher. The total increase of 8 to 10 million barrels could accommodate an increase of, say, 3 million in Middle East output and still permit the building of greater supply security.

Security of petroleum supply will not emerge, however, from any process currently

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under way. It may be attainable, in considerable part, if sought by the deliberate, combined action of the major associated governments. Now it is not an objective of combined policy at all.

Achievement of tolerable security in petroleum supply during the next years would require a positive program for increasing ready capacity to produce and use crude petroleum, in relatively secure countries, by an amount of perhaps 600,000 to 700,000 barrels per day in each year, cumulatively, from now until 1970. A tiny fraction of this amount may come from continental Europe, a more significant fraction from North Africa. But it would seem that the larger part of the total additional capacity essential to security must come from the Americas. When the more secure countries of the non-Communist world have a ready oil production capacity of about 20 million barrels daily, it will perhaps be a tolerable margin of insecurity to rely on the Middle East to supply 7 or 8 million.

The great obstacle to effective action consists in the fact that the Americas themselves are in no direct danger. Even in 1958 the United States did not import half a million barrels daily from all Asia. In time, the United States can safely take a larger volume. The other Americas can also utilize some Middle East supplies. The security of the Americas would not be seriously impaired by imports of even a million barrels daily from Asia today (about 8 per cent of total consumption), and the Americas might be able to utilize safely as much as 1½ million barrels daily of Asian supply by 1970.

The position of Africa, Oceania, and Asia (outside the Middle East itself) is precarious. Abstractly considered, it would be possible for this vast area to secure about one-third of its oil supplies from the Indonesian archipelago. But in fact some Indonesian output goes to the Americas, and Indonesia has its own security problem. The dependence of the area on Middle East supply remains decisive. India and some other Asian countries may not be concerned about this dependence, but the countries of the Western Pacific have every reason to be concerned. So long as this dependence persists, the security provision for Japan, Australia, the Philippines, etc. cannot be considered more than nominal. We have Quemoy and Matsu, but we do not have a petroleum industry which could meet a crisis demand in the Western Pacific.

In this connection, the United States regulation of crude petroleum imports into the West Coast requires special attention. As the West Coast has been designated an area of deficit crude supply, import restrictions there are less severe than for the rest of the United States. Crude petroleum therefore comes to the refineries in the Los Angeles area, the San Francisco area, and the Puget Sound area from the Middle East and from Indonesia. But there are ample crude reserves in western Canada which could be brought to Puget Sound, and there are ample reserves in the southern Mountain States which could flow to California. Offshore activity in California could also be expanded. What the current regulatory program does is to preserve the status of the West Coast as an Achilles heel in the national security. Together with the Caribbean, this coastal area of the United States and Canada should be the supply source to meet any crisis demand in the Western Pacific. Under present policy, it will be less and less able to meet even its own needs.

But the worst case of petroleum insecurity remains Western Europe. Europe is now moving toward a use of 3 million barrels daily of Middle East crude, and then it will be 4 million and then 5 million. After the events of recent years, no responsible European can count on the Middle East as a secure source of oil. A security policy would require that an effort be made to reduce gradually the quotient of dependence on the Middle East to half or less. France apart, there seems today, however, nothing that can be dignified by the name of a Western European petroleum supply policy. France is seeking its own independence in North Africa. The rest of Europe passively

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accepts the facts of its dependence and insecurity, perhaps because, after the experience of the conversations that preceded the Suez incident, there is no belief that the United States would be willing to help.

There is always the danger of rushing enthusiastically from one insecurity to another. There may be an element of such danger in the French effort to substitute North Africa for the Middle East. The political future of Algeria is too uncertain to enable us to define the contribution of North Africa to a secure petroleum supply. There are those who would raise similar questions about some countries in the Americas, and these questions need serious attention.

First Canada. Canada's proven reserves are about 4 billion barrels, and her known oil provinces are very large. Yet production in Canada has just now reached the level of ½ million barrels a day. Canada pays a price for being safe. Major oil companies who possess reserves elsewhere are interested in exploring and preempting supply in Canada, but not in producing. They would rather produce in more risky areas and keep Canadian reserves for the distant future. Canada is therefore deprived of a fully effective domestic petroleum industry. As a by-product of limited development in oil, there is also limited development of Canadian natural gas resources. If developed, Canadian petroleum could contribute substantially to the Central, Western, and Pacific Northwestern regions of the United States—on a price basis competitive with United States crudes. But the hot oil of the Middle East is cheaper. It preempts all import requirements in the Pacific northwest, brings Venezuelan oil cheaply to Montreal, and puts a brake on potential Canadian production. No reasonable conception of the national security can provide a sound basis for treating Canadian oil differently from oil produced in the United States, yet Canadian oil is labeled as foreign—and presumably as constituting part of the threat to American security—in the current import control program. It might, of course, be held, in a strained conception of diplomacy, that Canadian oil must be treated like any other for fear that some less reliable supplying country might take offense. This is to neglect confirmed friends for the purpose of courting uncertain favors.*

The case of the Caribbean is different, but not decisively so. The Caribbean area has proven reserves in excess of 20 billion barrels and a production of about 3½ million barrels daily. Much of this production is quite cheap. The area is not without internal problems of political stability. There are also questions of observance of contractual obligations, formal or implied. It does not, however, seem unfeasible to establish reasonable, stable relationships in petroleum development. A large expansion program would break many barriers. There must naturally be United States government participation in establishing the framework for any such program, and it would be best if governments of Western Europe and the Western Pacific also spoke in their own names. Combined development planning and constructive financial participation need not be deterred by the bogey of dollar diplomacy: enemies will always find words for name-calling. The Caribbean petroleum supply cannot fail to be considered as part of the security base of the Western alliance.

## VI

In the six months preceding the establishment of the mandatory oil import program of March 10, 1959, the condition of the oil industry in the United States improved decidedly. In production, the petroleum industry suffered less during the 1957-58 recession and recovered more rapidly than United States industry as a whole.

Domestic crude oil prices had been increased in 1957; part of the increases eroded during the 1957-58 recession and under the pressure of oil imports. But products prices and refiners' margins were improving notably in the six months before the

*Since this was written, President Eisenhower has amended the import control system, permitting free importation from Canada and Mexico by land but not by water.

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imposition of mandatory import controls. Profits correspondingly rose. It is not only the popular view but also the conclusion of severely objective analysis that the petroleum industry enjoys a higher profit ratio than the average. Even by the standards that prevail in the petroleum industry, the fourth quarter of 1958 was one of good profits and the first quarter of 1959 even better.

The most difficult thing to measure objectively in the oil industry is the volume of exploratory activity. President Eisenhower and his various committees found that the national security was threatened by excessive oil imports, largely because of what they interpreted to be the discouragement this gave to domestic exploration. Such discouragement would indeed be a serious matter if it existed, but in the United States in early 1959 this danger was more potential than actual. Oil companies which had curtailed their development drilling drastically (because they did not need more oil immediately) were still exploring vigorously.

Apart from the memory of the recession, the decisive factor pressing toward mandatory import controls was the two-cost position that prevailed in crude oil. We may cite the problem of an independent Texas or Louisiana coastal refiner in the six months of September 1958 to February 1959. By definition, he has no crude production and no captive marketing outlets. If he operated entirely with domestic crude, he might earn a gross refiner's margin of 60¢ to 80¢ a barrel. But he could import equivalent crude from the Middle East or Venezuela at a price, delivered to his refinery, 50¢ to 80¢ per barrel below the domestic price. Importing crude meant practically doubling the gross profit margin. Every refiner wanted to import.

This two-cost position indicates that, in establishing mandatory import controls, President Eisenhower was dealing with a real problem. The problem may even be regarded as a typical one of dumping, and the imposition of import control was an entirely appropriate first response to it. But this first response, however appropriate, does not confront the factors that cause the dumping. To do that, in this case, requires a comprehensive and creative program of national and international expansion of secure petroleum supply, a program that should have a magnitude, geographical range, and time perspective commensurate with the duration of the sources of insecurity.

## VII

THE administrators of United States mandatory oil import controls are not to be envied their job. They are allocating profits. A refiner who receives a license to import a barrel of crude receives a title to earn something like twice as great a gross profit as he would earn from utilizing a barrel of domestic origin. He can trade the product imported under license—with a profit indistinguishable from selling the license itself.* The license therefore becomes the scarcest good. The power to bestow that license is accordingly not one to be borne lightly.

Unfortunately, we must conclude that the licensing power will need to be exercised for a long time. The international circumstances that led to the present controls will surely persist for many years. Not improbably, import controls will become a permanent feature of the United States petroleum industry. A variety of legal and political challenges may arise, however, before administration of the control system is regularized. At least one acute legal mind raised the issue of the constitutionality of Presidential allocation of petroleum import licenses even before mandatory controls were proclaimed. This issue is to be distinguished sharply from the constitutional authority of the President to reach a finding of the existence of a threat to the national security from excessive oil imports; of that authority there is no question. But there may be serious doubt of the constitutional authority of the President, under the statute employed for this proclamation, to set up a system of

*Import rights are being exchanged today for about one dollar per barrel.

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allocating imports among various companies. Congress provided the President no standard whatsoever for such allocation in this statute. The old "hot oil" case therefore comes immediately to mind. There constitutionality was denied because "Congress left the matter to the President without standard or rule," and, the Court found, "the point is not one of motives, but of constitutional authority, for which the best of motives is not a substitute." Here also it may well be found that good motives do not suffice, or Congress may act legislatively to establish standards for allocations even before the courts decide.

President Eisenhower administered a shock to the complacency of the petroleum industry when his statement proclaiming import control also prescribed price surveillance. Large sections of the petroleum industry had previously regarded mandatory controls only as a mechanism for guaranteeing profits, particularly the profits of domestic crude producers. The domestic industry hardly appreciates as yet the weight and possible consequences of the import controls mechanism. Simple-minded protectionism may find that it has bought more than it bargained for. If a profit is protected, the question of its fairness soon arises. From import controls to price controls and then to domestic allocations, is a sequence that will certainly, at worst, take years, but—once on the way—it may prove ineluctable.

While exact measurement is not possible, the Presidential control proclamation apparently restricts petroleum imports initially to a smaller share of demand than was supplied in 1956-58 but a larger share than in 1953-55. In the earlier years, imports ran 13 to 14 per cent of demand, while in the later ones they had been 16 to 18 per cent. The President's formula works out to about 15 per cent. The exact initial figure is not important. But what *is* important is that no impression should be conveyed that there is now a vested right of domestic producers to a fixed share of the market. If, as we have argued, Canadian and Caribbean supplies can contribute to the national security equally with domestic ones, a pretended national security interest should not be advanced as a reason for excluding them from competition. The petroleum industry will be unwise to buy a year or two of higher profits at the expense of converting itself into the image, in the national consciousness, of a kept industry.

President Eisenhower concluded his statement explaining the establishment of mandatory import control by referring to informal diplomatic conversations with Canada and Venezuela regarding a coordinated approach to oil in the perspective of the defense of the Western hemisphere. Such conversations may be a beginning, but the perspective seems not the correct one. Looking at the Western hemisphere alone, there are things to be done in international oil policy, but not the most important things. Only when Western hemisphere oil potential is considered in relation to the world-wide requirements of all non-Communist nations does the perspective become true.

THERE may be reasoned grounds for restrained confidence that wider views will emerge, after some time. Institutions have their own momentum. Import controls over petroleum, however motivated in their origin, need not remain confined within the objectives of a sterile protectionism. Thoughtful administrators and legislators will be forced repeatedly, if only by conflicts of interest, to mull over again what has been done, what purpose present actions serve, and what remains to be done.

It is of the essence of a tolerable ordering of international petroleum affairs that there should be a swift and substantial reduction in the dependence of the non-Communist world upon Middle East petroleum. Reduced dependence need not wait long years for the development of alternative types of energy. It is achievable, at reasonable cost, through the expansion of petroleum output in more secure areas. But this is not an achievement that will come autonomously through the "wisdom of the market." It requires action of deliberate intent, and that action is not yet in train.

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# AT TIMES IN FLIGHT

## *A Parable*

HENRY ROTH

I WAS courting a young woman, if the kind of brusque, uncertain, equivocal attentions I paid her might be called courting: it was for me at any rate, never having done it before.

I had met her at Z, the artists' colony, a place you've probably heard of, where writers, painters, and musicians were invited for the summer, or part of it, in the hope that, relieved of their usual pressures and preoccupations, and provided with abundant leisure, they would create. Unfortunately it didn't work that way, as you've probably also heard. Most of us, it would seem, needed the pressures and preoccupations, since once there, we loafed or spent a great deal of time in frivolity and idle chatter. It was during the time of the Spanish Civil War, in 1938 to be exact, and of course that formed a part of our conversation, the fact that the Loyalists seemed on the verge of victory and yet incapable of gaining it. There was also at that time a kind of projection of the Marxist mood among young intellectuals: a kind of cynicism had entered, worldliness, a kind of sophistication. I mention these things to recall the mood of the time as it seemed to me.

I was then engaged in writing a second novel, which I had agreed to complete for my publisher. I had already written quite a section, and this opening section had been accepted and extolled. It was only necessary for me to finish it, and that was all. But it went badly from then on; in fact, it had gone badly before I reached Z—I can't blame Z for that: they provided me with the necessary environment to write in. It had gone badly—aims had become lost, purpose, momentum lost. A profound change seemed to be taking place within me in the way I viewed my craft, in my objectivity. It is difficult to say. I am, unfortunately, not analytical enough to be capable of isolating the trouble, though I don't know what good that would have done either.

That was the time, the general mood, the predicament—in sketchiest of forms. The young woman I was courting—we shall call her Martha—was a very personable, tall, fair-haired young woman, a pianist and composer, a young woman with a world of patience, practicability, and self-discipline—bred and raised in the best traditions of New England and the Middle West, the most wholesome traditions. I was, of course, at that time, sufficiently advanced and superior to be somewhat disdainful of those traditions. I wondered whether there was any reality to my courtship, any future, whether, in short, anything would come of it. I was so committed to being an artist—in spite of anything.

The summer advanced. I wish I were clever enough to relate some of the clever things that were said and done there or to re-create some of the clever people who sojourned there, or give some notion of the setting, the place in which we lived and spent our time, the semi-cloistral mansion,

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IN 1934 HENRY ROTH published a novel, *Call It Sleep,* which was acclaimed as an outstanding work by a newcomer. Soon after that, Mr. Roth retired from writing to raise ducks and geese in Augusta, Maine. Since the war, various critics have singled out *Call It Sleep* as a neglected achievement in American Jewish writing. "At Times in Flight" is Mr. Roth's first published story in many years. He writes: ". . . The main meaning of the story to me lies in the projection, so to speak, of the inadequacy of a man's art in the face of modern realities, and the implied decision to make a new start."



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the individual cabins for composition, the walks, statuary, the rest. I think many people know about the place and have heard about its former hostess and its various diversions. That will have to do. A few things come to mind: playing charades in the evening in the darkly furnished, richly carpeted, discreetly shadowed main room, the ample servings of food, the complaints of constipation, the missives that were wont to be sent by the hostess to her guests calling attention to some minor infraction of the rules or breach of propriety. Like all such places, I suppose, it had a tendency to become ingrown.

The colony was close to Saratoga Springs, and I owned a Model-A Ford, and in the early morning before breakfast I would drive down from Z to the spa. There was a kind of public place there in those days, a place where paper cups could be bought for a cent, and a sort of fountain where the water bubbled through a slender pipe into a basin, and I say bubbled because that was one of its attractions, the fact that it did bubble.

Ever since childhood I have regarded carbonated water as something of a treat, something not easily obtainable, in fact, only by purchase, remembering the seltzer-water man on the East Side laboring up the many flights of stairs with his dozen siphons in a box. And here it was free, and not only free but salutary. The water had a slightly musty or sulphurous flavor to go with its effervescence, but its properties were surpassingly benign.

I happened to mention to a small group standing in front of the main building of Z the effectiveness and bracing qualities of the waters of the spring, and invited at large anyone who wished to accompany me in the morning. The response was almost universally negative. "Drink that water? That stuff?" was the tenor of their comment. "I'd sooner drink mud-water," said one of the poets. But one person did reply in the affirmative. That was Martha. She liked the water; it shortly became apparent that she liked it as much as I did.

So we were soon driving together in the morning, from Z to the spa, traversing the mile or so of highway that led past the race track under the morning trees. The racing season was due to begin, and as a kind of added incentive to the ride, we could see the preliminary training of the horses—whether this was on the track itself, or a subsidiary one beside it, I no longer remember. But as we drove past in the early morning, we would see what I suppose was one of the usual sights at race tracks, but to us a novelty: the grooms or trainers bent low over their mounts and urging them on for a longer or shorter gallop. A horse is a beautiful thing. A fleet, running horse, and we would stop sometimes on our way and watch one course along the white railing. Enormously supple and swift, they seemed at times in flight. The dirt beneath their hooves seemed less spurred by their hooves than drawn away beneath them in their magnificent stride.

THE racing season opened. We had neither of us ever been to a horse race, and we decided it might be a worth-while experience to attend one, especially since the track itself was so accessible, and as an additional inducement again, in view of the traditional impecuniousness of artists—free. In other words, the race track adjoined Z at one side, and it was just a matter of a short walk through the woods of the estate before one came to a turn of the track—or so we had been told—and what could be more pleasant to lovers, or quasi-lovers, than a walk through a forest on a pleasant day. We set out in the afternoon.

The path was one not frequently trodden. We more or less sensed its direction, though I think as we approached we could hear a murmur through the woods, and so oriented ourselves. We arrived at a fairly steep embankment which we climbed, and came to a halt before the iron palings of a fence. The track lay before us—at a peculiar angle, one might say, to the normal. We were not in the grandstand or near it, viewing the activities—we were far away from it. In fact, the grandstand with its throng was mostly

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a blur of color, and the horses being paraded in front of it were tiny and remote figures. It is perhaps memory that diminishes the scene. We seemed to be, as we virtually were, in some coign or niche where we could behold the excitement in a remote and almost secret way. I can't recall what we said there; I know we were both enchanted by the spectacle, miniature though it was, as though it were a race track in an Easter egg. There was an undercurrent of sound that reached us from the grandstand, the band playing, the mingled voices, a certain far-off animation and stir that even at this distance communicated itself.

The horses cavorted, shied, sidled restively as they were brought to the post. The crowd hushed immediately, and the bugle sounded insistent and clear, and suddenly the race began.

THE pack headed in a direction away from us toward the opposite curve of the track, and if anything, they were tinier than before, toy horses, toy riders, far off and almost leisurely with distance. Then they rounded the far curve and came toward us, and now they appeared to gain in impetus and gain in size. They were no longer toy horses and toy riders. They were very real and growing in reality evrey second. One could see the utter seriousness of the thing, the supreme effort, the rivalry as horse and man strained every muscle to forge to the front. Oh, it was no toy spectacle; they were in fierce and bitter competition, vying horse and man, even the mounted man, vying for the lead, and the glowing eyeballs and the shrunken jockeys, the quiet, the enormous suppleness and the cry. They struck the left-hand turn of the track and rounded it; each horse and the whole band cantered as one in their effort to stay close to the inner railing. And then my attention was drawn to something strange—I don't know why. Perhaps what was about to happen was already happening—a jockey close to the lead, or in the forward half of the pack, a jockey in pale green silks, seemed to be toppling.

I couldn't believe my eyes, and in fact my mind seemed to cancel the sight and give it another interpretation. But he *was* toppling—and in another moment, he and his mount disappeared. And then in a furious rush the whole pack pounded by, a haze of hues. I glanced at Martha. She was following with her eyes the leaders as they rounded the turn on our right and entered the straightaway, and I was almost tempted to look that way too, such was the suction of their surge, but instead I looked back. The jockey in green was on the ground, still rolling. The horse had fallen a short way from him and was pawing air and ground trying to regain his footing. The jockey arose, ducked under the inner railing, and limped across the greensward rubbing his dusty white riding breeches; officials were hurrying toward him. And now the horse arose and began running after the pack. But he no longer ran like a race horse. There was something terribly ungainly and grotesque about his motion—and suddenly I realized why; his further hind leg had been broken. It flopped along beneath him as ludicrous as a stuffed stocking, and as incapable of bearing weight. "Look," I said. "Look, Martha." She withdrew rapt eyes from the finish line, questioningly. "He's broken his leg."

Her expression changed to one of horror, and that was the word she uttered: "Horrors!"

"Yes," I said. "Just now."

"Oh, that beautiful animal!"

The horse lurched past us, ran a few more steps and careened against the inner railing. His legs milled beneath him, but he no longer could rise.

"Isn't that simply ghastly!" said Martha.

"Yes."

"How did it ever happen?"

"I'm not sure. Jolted I imagine. I could see something break the rhythm of the race, and then—"

"That poor beautiful animal."

"I guess he's done for."

"Why?"

I pointed. Across the greensward, a small truck had been set in motion, a mortuary truck I supposed. There were booted men

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clinging to the sides of the cab. Martha still regarded me questioningly. "I suspect they're going to shoot him."

"Oh, *no*!" she exclaimed. "No!"

"Well what on earth are they going to do with him? He's done for."

She uttered a cry and suddenly began running down the embankment.

"Wait a minute!" I stretched out a restraining hand.

"No! Please!"

"What's the matter?"

"I don't want to be shot!"

"You?"

"Bullets ricochet. I'm afraid."

"Just a minute then. I want to see what happens." I had gone a few steps down the embankment, and now I climbed up again. It was more or less what I had expected. The truck was rolling to a stop beside the animal. Men had already jumped off. Some kneeled, others squatted about the horse, examining him. There was a brief conference. And then the cluster of conference opened up into a kind of expectant semi-circle, out of which one man strode forward with a pistol and held it close to the horse's head. The report that followed seemed oddly insignificant for so grave and dread an event. I watched them load the carcass aboard the truck, and for some reason a similar scene on the East Side of long ago returned—an image from long-vanished childhood of a cop shooting a horse fallen in the snow, and the slow winch of the big green van that hauled the animal aboard later. So that was the end? *Ars brevis, vita longa.* I came down from the embankment.

She was smiling now, a little placatingly. "I'm sorry I'm such a sissy."

I shrugged. "What's the difference. I hope I wasn't rude."

"No. You were just yourself."

"Thanks." I laughed. "We come here once in a lifetime, and once in a thousand or a million this happens. And so close."

"Disappointed?"

"No. I didn't bet on him. But the odd thing is when I saw him going down, I felt a sense of loss."

She regarded me sympathetically. "We can see another race if you want to."

"No, not unless you do."

She shook her head.

"Well, lead the way back," I said. "You've got a better sense of direction than I have." I followed her into the narrow and rather somber band of trees that bordered the race track. Beyond lay a glade with a measure of sunlight, and behind us was a scene that I should muse on a great deal, of a horse destroyed when the race became real.

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# THE JEWS OF ALBUQUERQUE

## *A Southwestern Community*

MORRIS FREEDMAN

ALBUQUERQUE, originally settled in 1708, lies on the Rio Grande River in New Mexico, some sixty miles south of Santa Fe. Running through the city is the ancient Camino Real, laid out by the Conquistadores from Mexico to Santa Fe; it is now U.S. 85, part of the Pan-American Highway. The Rio Grande valley is one of the few fertile areas in this region and when drought hit the country to the northwest in the 13th century, most of the local Indians, who had been living on the sides of cliffs, abandoned their villages—"pueblos"—and migrated into the valley. There are pueblos to the north, west, and south of Albuquerque today.

To the east of the city are the Sandia and Manzano mountains, which rise to peaks of 10,000 feet; a high long ridge to the west is punctuated by extinct volcanic cones. Albuquerque, itself a mile high, lies between these two rises; the older residences and the business section are on the valley floor, the newer sections on the "heights." The city features splendid open panoramas of mountains and of desolate, brown tableland—"mesa." Cactus and other desert plants grow freely on the mesa.

Although most Pueblo Indians now dress like other city dwellers, some still visit Albuquerque wearing their headbands, their hair long in back, and crimson velvet shirts and blouses, with elaborately worked silver belts and necklaces of silver and turquoise. Visiting their religious dances is a favorite local recreation. (At the Santo Domingo Corn Dance, a Pueblo father complained to me that the youngsters were abandoning the orthodox ways of their parents. One old gentleman dancing away at this festival had a crew-cut and a clipped mustache: he worked at Los Alamos and had come to the dance to maintain his tribal privileges.) The Bernallilo County Indian Hospital, a huge modern pile of brick, concrete, and glass, attracts Navajo Indians from greater distances than the Pueblos; they usually come in a pick-up truck, with adults and children crowded into the cab. The women wear huge bright blankets and soft squaw boots.

Since Albuquerque is not a cattle or sheep center, there are fewer authentic cowboys in town—even during the state fair in the fall—than in Times Square during the Madison Square Garden rodeo. A good number of residents affect wide-brimmed Stetsons, as well as clomping, spurless cowboy boots, and bolo ties (leather strings with an Indian worked silver centerpiece). But the only holsters you see with active pistols in them are on the hips of the local, white-helmeted motorcycle police, or, during fair time, of movie-type cowboys who belong to the Bernallilo County Sheriff's Posse, a ceremonial organization.

The dominant culture of the city until recent times was Spanish, and the native architecture, ever since the Conquistadores, is a combination of pueblo (after the low, long flat-roofed buildings of the Indians, which had small windows and few of them) and adobe (the mud bricks with which the Indians built their homes). While many of the new housing developments still follow

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pueblo style, none of the mass production builders use mud bricks, which are a foot thick and must be made by hand; instead, they use machine-made cinder or concrete blocks or simply stucco. Today only the very rich (who can afford to pay the high labor costs) or the very poor build with adobe. Spanish is still the first language of many Albuquerque residents, and the only language of some; easily half the city's population is bi-lingual, including the Jewish businessmen downtown. State law requires election ballots and legislative hearings to be printed in English and Spanish.

East-west highway 66, which forms Albuquerque's central avenue, misleads the tourist: it is garish and honky-tonkish, all flashing neon lights and moving signs. Yet there are quiet, tidy neighborhoods only a few blocks north or south. On the fringes of the city, the speculative housing developers have thrown up whole rambling villages: clusters of square, squat homes, bristling with utility poles and television antennas. Peaked roof, California ranch-style modern, with sliding glass doors and "picture" windows, alternates here with pueblo, all of the houses done in pastels of pink, green, blue, and brown. The first builder to venture to the outskirts was a Jew, Sam Hoffman, who put up solidly built, low-cost brick homes, all identical in plan and appearance, just after World War II. The houses, which now sell for double their cost, are still much in demand, and all the urban facilities as well as other builders have come out to the development, formally called Hoffmantown.

Albuquerque's economy revolves around the University of New Mexico and such large government installations as contract and research facilities for the Atomic Energy Commission and the Air Force. There is relatively little manufacturing. As a result, the government personnel are predominantly middle class, ranging from technological and statistical assistants to research engineers and scientists. The physicians and the university faculty swell the middle-class ranks. While Albuquerque cannot boast as many retired millionaires as Santa Fe, many of the Southwest's banking, industrial, legal, and commercial interests are centered here.

The lower class can be divided into three groups. There are urbanized Indians, who maintain nominal contact with their nearby pueblos but do housework and unskilled construction labor in the city. There are the Spanish-speaking groups, by far the largest, who live in such slum areas as "Martineztown" in the city and on marginal farms stretching out along the Rio Grande (a substantial number of the native Spanish-speaking population has risen into the middle and upper classes). Finally, there are "Anglos" (which includes Negroes) who are still drifting with the movements stimulated in the 30's, from Texas and Oklahoma, the Deep South, and occasionally the Northeast. Since there is no large-scale employment of unskilled labor, the lower class is not a stable one, nor is it as large as might be expected from the size of the city.

THERE are some 750 Jewish families—more than 2,000 persons in all—among the nearly 200,000 people of Albuquerque. Nearby cities of similar size, such as El Paso and Phoenix, have about twice as many Jews. Tucson, with half as many persons as Albuquerque, at last count had five times as many Jews. Denver, perhaps three times the size of Albuquerque, has ten times as many Jews. And in all these cities, the Jewish population is growing faster than in Albuquerque.

Community leaders explain Albuquerque's relative paucity of Jews by two factors. First, Jews were barred from the area when it was under Spanish and Mexican domination and subject to the Inquisition. Jewish settlers first came to Albuquerque in the 1860's, somewhat later than to Santa Fe and other parts of the state.* Second, Albuquerque is not a prime resort, health, retirement, or industrial center. Jews heading westward generally come to Albuquerque only if they

*There is a record of a Jewish copper-miner in Silver City in the 1840's. He later settled in Las Vegas, New Mexico, as a merchant. See also Albert Rosenfeld's "In Santa Fe, the City Different," COMMENTARY, May 1954.

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have a specific job to fill. When they go west without a particular job, they tend to choose Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, or Phoenix. "We have never felt the need to swell our size as a means of defense or security," one Jewish community leader told me. "We welcome Jews to Albuquerque, of course, but we don't recruit them."

There has never been a Jewish "problem" in the city or state. The serious minority issue involves relations between the Spanish- and English-speaking populations. The Negro population is minuscule, and Jews and Negroes are usually classed as "Anglos." The English-speaking citizens constitute better than 60 per cent of the population, and keep increasing; the Spanish population has remained relatively static for decades. The attitude of most Jews toward the Spanish population seems indistinguishable from that of other "Anglos": detached, aloof, not really "prejudiced," but hesitant about "mingling."

The earliest Jewish settlers in the Southwest almost all came from Germany and France. They arrived in such small numbers and at such widely separated times that, except for members of the same families, there was little contact among them. The fortunes of Jewish enterprise paralleled those of other pioneers. When Las Vegas was the main commercial center of the region, Jews settled there and sold general merchandise. When business shifted to Albuquerque with the extension of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad at the turn of the century, Jewish merchants moved with the general trend. (Even before the railroad passed through the city, there were Jewish ranchers in the area.) When general wholesale merchandising (ranging from groceries through hardware to dry goods) was hit hard by specialized merchandising, the Jewish merchants were scattered as thoroughly as the non-Jewish ones. Indeed, only one Jewish name—Ilfeld—survives prominently from the days of general merchandising; one brother pioneered in Las Vegas, two others in Albuquerque.

East European immigrants came into the state as miners and peddlers, but soon shifted to retailing. As the early retailers moved into the wholesale ranks, enlarging their original shops or opening branches in other cities, their places were taken by Jews who came in during the 1920's and 30's and opened new retail shops. Many of these newcomers were from the Midwest, particularly from Cleveland, and most were of East European origin.

Except perhaps for the pawnshop trade and insurance, no profession or business in Albuquerque is dominated by Jews. There are many Jewish doctors, but it was the Lovelace Clinic, founded by non-Jewish physicians, which helped establish Albuquerque as a medical center. (During the 30's and 40's, the city began to compete with Denver, Phoenix, and Tucson as a place of treatment for the tubercular and asthmatic.) In the lower echelons of the civil service, one finds more and more Jews transferring here from less congenial climates.

ALBUQUERQUE Jews have always been well integrated. They were among the founders of the city's country club. When members of the Seligman family came to the state from Germany, around 1900, they learned Navajo and Spanish before English. Henry N. Jaffa, first president of the Temple, was a mayor of Albuquerque. Leading Republican and Democratic figures, the president of the city's United Fund, the chairman of the state parole board, principals of several public schools, are Jewish. So is the present head football coach at the university. Jews are ranchers, archaeologists, Indian traders, engineers, foresters. One Jewish rancher who married an Acoma Pueblo girl was received into the tribe and eventually elected its governor. The Rabbi of the Temple exchanges pulpits with Protestant ministers, speaks frequently before Christian groups, and has been president of the city's Ministerial Alliance. Will Keleher, a Catholic lawyer in town and an authority on Billy the Kid, is one of the best-informed sources on the history of Jews in Albuquerque and New Mexico. The subject of the annual research lecture at the university this year was the

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Jewish merchant in New Mexico, and the lecturer was Professor William J. Parish, who is not Jewish.

Social mixing seems as complete as business and professional integration. Magidson's, a downtown restaurant which features traditional Jewish dishes (as well as shrimp and fish on Friday), is regarded by many as a non-sectarian luncheon club. Most Albuquerque Jews have close friends among their working colleagues who are not Jewish—the engineers and scientists at Sandia Corporation, the officers and men at Sandia Base, Manzano Base, and Kirtland Air Force Base, the faculty at the university, the physicians at the Lovelace Clinic and the Veterans Administration hospital. Activities at the country club generally involve Jews and non-Jews. Marriage between Jews and non-Jews is common: the non-Jewish partner usually converts, particularly if it is the woman. (A recent marriage linked a Seligman, name changed to Sullivan, and the daughter of one of the earliest Spanish families.) A number of such converted persons are prominent in Jewish community life.

Of course, there is the usual range of exclusively Jewish social circles, and the members of the Shul tend to mix less with non-Jews than the members of the Temple. The social affairs at both the Shul and Temple are many and varied. In one week recently, there were meetings or parties sponsored by Hadassah, B'nai B'rith, the Temple's men's club,* the Temple's sisterhood, the National Council of Jewish Women, the city's Jewish Youth Group, Young Judea, and the Jewish Welfare Fund. The women meet for fashion shows, bridge lessons, or teas, and Hadassah sponsors a "study group."

Almost all of the Jewish families live in the Heights—not in any one neighborhood, but in clusters, depending on their economic level. Most live in lots of limited size in California-style ranch houses, sometimes with swimming pools or tennis courts. A colony of older Jewish families has settled near the country club, one of the wealthiest areas in town. Only one Jewish family is known to live in the older valley.

Since the original Jewish congregation in the city was of the Reform persuasion, there has never been a *mohel,* a *shochet,* or a *mikveh* here, and no kosher butcher has been able to hold out very long. From six to twenty families observe *kashruth* in their homes (which figure you get depends on your informant), obtaining their meats by refrigerated express from Denver. A local bakery has only just put in separate equipment for making kosher products under the supervision of the Shul's present rabbi, who is Orthodox. (The equipment was paid for by the ladies' auxiliary.) A Jewish physician performs ritual circumcision with a rabbi in attendance, and a swimming pool has been used for immersion in the ceremony of conversion (when immersion has been requested). Jewish life, of course, centers around the two congregations, though it may be that the unaffiliated Jewish families in town constitute a larger number than the membership of either Temple or Shul.

TEMPLE ALBERT, the Reform congregation, was founded in 1897 at a meeting where the honor of naming the congregation was auctioned off. The Grunsfeld family claimed the honor with its bid of $250, and named the Temple after Albert Grunsfeld. Most of the early families were of German or French origin; other prominent names were Jaffa, Ilfeld, Dreyfus, Ravel, Lewinson, Mendell, Moise, Meyer. Although most of the original Temple members were local retail and wholesale merchants, a few were real estate men and ranchers. Some came to services from outlying sections of the state, by stagecoach or private surrey or on horseback. In 1900, the first Temple building was dedicated; in the late 40's it was sold to the American Legion, which subsequently turned it over to one of the city's many Protestant sects. The building, which is now being razed, for many years bore the Star of David in its circular windows and a huge

*Perhaps a half dozen non-Jews belong to the Temple's men's club and many Jewish members bring their non-Jewish friends to the monthly Sunday breakfast.

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sign in front which read "Jesus Heals."

The Temple's present building, completed in 1951, is a long, low brick edifice with a flat roof. The chapel (called the "sanctuary" by the Rabbi) occupies the main portion of the building, its walls of bare red brick. At the rear of the chapel is a lobby, and beyond this a social hall with a raised stage. The building also contains a kitchen, a library, and classrooms.

The congregation has grown considerably in the last decade. In the late 40's, it had 125 families, and there were 29 children in the religious school; today, it has 250 or more families, and over 200 children in the school. (This gives it about fifty families more than the Shul, and about twice as many children.) The growth reflects the influx of young married couples with children of school age. The average age of Temple members, excluding children, is in the late thirties, much younger than the average ten years ago. Almost all the Jewish lawyers, physicians, and dentists in town belong to the Temple; those engineers and scientists who join anything join the Temple; more university professors belong to the Temple than to the Shul, although a number of Jewish faculty members belong to neither.

"I like the Temple very much," I was told by a friend, who had come from a large Midwestern city and had never before been affiliated with a Jewish group. "It takes itself very modestly, yet positively. The membership secretary guarantees that the Rabbi's Friday night sermon won't take longer than a half hour, and the entire service no more than an hour. That way you can plan a social evening or a trip to the movies."

The Temple's religious school has eleven classrooms. The classes parallel public school grades, and follow what is apparently a national pattern for religious school teaching,* repeating the material three times through the entire curriculum, "enriching" it for the older children. For Bar Mitzvah, or Bas Mitzvah, the Temple requires a minimum of seven years of religious school and four in Hebrew classes. The Hebrew classes, with seventy students, meet forty minutes each Saturday, and spend the first year on the alphabet.

Rabbi David D. Shor, who was raised in Dallas and ordained at Hebrew Union College, has been with the Temple ten years. When it was the only congregation in the state, he was considered New Mexico's Jewish "bishop," and traveled a good deal to outlying communities. Most of these, however, now have congregations of their own. He is a calm, soft-spoken man, whose Friday night sermons do indeed take no more than a half-hour and are thoughtful, well organized, and well written. There is a neat, sensible efficiency about him in harmony with the architecture of the Temple, and the congregation has just eliminated the clause in its constitution calling for biennial reelection of the rabbi.

The board members, officers, and trustees of the Temple include representatives of the older families, but several members are very recent arrivals. Annual membership dues are a minimum of $75 a family, which includes the right of any children of school age to attend religious and Hebrew school, and the right of the whole family to attend Holiday services. Dues above the minimum are determined by a finance committee. Highest annual dues are $500, with many families in the $200-$300 bracket. Payment of higher dues is entirely voluntary; of 43 families which had their dues increased recently, 40 paid without a murmur. Many new members of the Temple, particularly those (like myself) who come to the city from the larger metropolitan centers, have never belonged to any congregation.

CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL, always referred to as the Shul, was founded in 1920 with the help of Temple Albert. Although associated with the national Conservative union, it has had both Conservative and Orthodox rabbis and considers itself "traditional." The early members arrived in the city in the first quarter of the century,

*See "Suburban Jewish Sunday School" by Theodore Frankel, COMMENTARY, June 1958.

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as part of the East European migration. On the average, its members are older than those of Temple Albert, and most of them are in small business or real estate. Several with whom I spoke promptly disparaged the Temple. "The Temple's men's club," one said, "is where the Jews in town bring the *goyim* to prove that Jews are human." The banter during lunch at Magidson's between Shul and Temple members, however, is incessant and good-natured. A recent wedding between a boy whose parents belonged to the Shul and a girl whose parents belonged to the Temple was widely referred to as a "mixed marriage." At a Hadassah show put on in the Temple's social hall, the star, a Shul member, stopped to translate remarks in Yiddish, explaining that he couldn't be sure he'd be understood, considering where he was. (He was largely correct.)

"We'd stop losing people to the Temple," one Shul member declared, "if we built ourselves a big, modern-type building, too, and threw in a swimming pool." The Shul's building, although designed by one of the architects who worked on the new Temple, is quite traditional, of white stucco with vaguely Oriental arches. It is older and smaller than the Temple. Annual dues are the same as for the Temple. Regular Friday night attendance is about sixty, augmented by attendance at Saturday morning services, which the Temple does not hold.

The Shul has been changing rabbis just about every two years for as long as most residents can remember. I asked the president of B'nai Israel, Simon Goldman, about this turnover. Goldman is the owner of "Simon's," one of the largest stores in the country specializing in Western clothes and supplies: saddles, boots, spurs, lariats, and the like. "We just haven't been lucky in getting a man with the right kind of personality," he told me. "But I think we have the man now."

"Luck is hardly the story," a former Shul member said to me. "The Shul changes rabbis regularly because the congregation just doesn't know what sort of man it wants. If they get a more or less liberal rabbi, they complain he's too free, he rides to Shul on the Sabbath, he conducts a *bris* without a *mohel*. If he happens to be strict, they resent his imposing his ways. Temple members at least know that they want to be Jews with a minimum of effort." Another Shul member explained to me that a rabbi's theological position was less important than his poise, maturity, capacity as a public speaker, his "presence." Still another Shul man said, "We'd like a $25,000 a year man, and all we can pay is ten."

THE present rabbi of the Shul, Max Leader, studied in Israel and at Yeshiva University. "The congregation is in need of strong spiritual leadership," he told me. "The people have to be set an example and must learn the reasons for ritual. I always walk to Shul on the Sabbath and the Holy Days, even though it is two miles from my home. Many persons take a motel room nearby on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and walk over. There's no reason why we can't get a *mohel* from Denver or El Paso for circumcision, or send a woman to a *mikveh* in those cities. As a matter of fact, this is just what my family does since I've been here. There should be no smoking on the Sabbath. Also, a large community like this should have a kosher butcher. I'll accommodate to the requirements of modern living as much as I can: I have no principled objection to Bas Mitzvah, for example, if the parents of the girl want it, and there's nothing wrong with conducting services partly in the vernacular. But you can't compromise on fundamentals."

Some of Rabbi Leader's innovations have startled members of the congregation. A class for teen-age boys, which parents thought would simply cover the meaning of certain religious customs, turned out to include practice in putting on phylacteries. He will not allow an "uncommitted" person, however qualified otherwise, to teach language, history, or customs to the children; "uncommitted" includes a Reform rabbi. As one admiring Shul member put it, "He will not countenance Reform-Judaism-with-a-skullcap-on."

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I spent two hours with Rabbi Leader and was impressed by the intensity and depth of his feelings. Most congregation members I have talked with regard him with admiration and respect. "Oh, I like him well enough," one summed up. "He may be quixotic, but he's serious and mature and the fierceness of his Orthodoxy sort of pleases me. I don't object to anything he does, just so long as he doesn't force me to do the same. And, who knows, maybe he'll convert me yet."

"WE SPEND a lot of time and effort helping Jewish people in trouble," Mrs. Rana Adler, executive secretary of the city's Jewish Welfare Fund, told me. "A refugee Jewish doctor finds himself in a mess with a certification question; we try to straighten it out, calling on the leading people in town to help. The director of the welfare fund in a northeastern city telephones me to help the son of a big contributor of theirs—he's traveling east on 66 from California, having deserted his wife and jumped bail; my job is to keep the police from getting to him before he has a chance to talk with his father and turn around and go back to California. We have lots of cases every year of Jewish families breaking up, and whether or not they've ever given a penny to the Fund, we help them get together, supplying money when necessary. If any Jewish man gets in trouble with the police, we go down to see that he's treated right."

Mrs. Adler also supervises the research of the committee that determines the allocation of other than UJA contributions (to 46 other groups), a sometimes touchy problem; acts as an amateur case and community worker; processes applications of local Jews and non-Jews to such places as the Jewish National Home for Asthmatic Children, in Denver; answers innumerable questions from all over the country ("How many Jews have served on the State Supreme Court?": answer, two); and maintains touch with the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. When twelve concentration-camp families came to the city in 1949, she was in charge of resettling them. She is also looking into the problem of building a Jewish community center for the city. She does all this on a halftime salary.

ALBUQUERQUE is an island surrounded largely by desert and mountain. Denver, the nearest large city, is nearly 500 miles away. The Jewish community seems as detached as the whole city is from national or world issues. International events receive skimpy coverage in the papers, although national civil rights events are reported somewhat more thoroughly. Recent agitation in behalf of a state "right to work" law was greeted by polite apathy. The city is liberal, in a large generous way, and that's that.

This remote sense of the outside world is very comfortable and comforting. Little time is spent on fruitless and enervating exchanges, and one sometimes thinks that there is indeed nothing to be troubled about. But occasionally it seems unrealistic, to put it mildly, when the city is bordered by jet plane installations and atomic bomb storage areas, and when it suppresses, as it unconsciously does, the subtleties of Anglo-Spanish tensions.*

There is a good deal of discontent about cultural matters. Recently a million-dollar city auditorium was completed; it had been heralded as a large step in a cultural renaissance. To justify the expenditure, and to recover the cost, it was designed to harbor both wrestling exhibitions and symphony concerts. Constructed as a circle, the auditorium excludes more than half of the seats for a stage presentation, and, because of the odd acoustics, erratically disperses much of the sound. Nevertheless, various city groups conscientiously continue to schedule concerts and recitals. Even the Jewish Wel-

*There is much agitation, for example, among "liberal" Anglos to teach Anglo children Spanish in the public schools. This is opposed by the public school administration, mostly on the grounds of cost, and also, less actively, by the Spanish-speaking population, which would like to wipe out the linguistic barrier that separates it from the Anglo community.

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fare Fund board, at a meeting I attended, briefly considered the possibility of having several Jewish organizations sponsor a "cultural event" in the auditorium. The board kept its head, however, noting that its main function was to support charities. Last year B'nai B'rith wiped out a huge deficit and filled its treasury after sponsoring a concert by the First Piano Quartet in the auditorium.

The city's feeling that there is a cultural dearth in Albuquerque is an exaggeration, for there are several good book stores and a fine public library. The university sponsors recitals of classical music and jazz, plays, art shows, symposiums on American education and science, and lectures by such men as Robert Maynard Hutchins, Thurman Arnold, and Dean Erwin N. Griswold—all of these events open to the public. The Temple's men's club even had two "intellectual" programs last year, sandwiched, it is true, between such things as lady judo experts and the local Shriners' choir. And there is always the possibility of responding to the fascinating Southwestern landscape and local culture.

The annual Hadassah variety show, an unsparing, unsentimental running commentary on the entire Jewish community, is brilliant in its satiric insights. The Temple's library has a good variety of Jewish reference texts, including the full Soncino Midrash, as well as current volumes of Jewish interest, and a fairly complete file of COMMENTARY. (The Shul has no library.) The Temple has been running a weekly Bible class for adults for several years, which, in addition to studying the Bible closely, ranges widely over all sorts of Jewish questions. Like the Shul's similar enterprise, it is popular and well attended.

Members of both congregations, however, avoid serious discussion of touchy subjects, like intermarriage or the ideological differences between the Temple and the Shul. In spite (perhaps because) of the high percentage of happy intermarriages in the community, intermarriage is considered so self-evidently bad in some circles that even a non-committal reference to the practice is taken to be in poor taste. As for Reform versus "traditional" Judaism, I was assured by both Shul and Temple representatives that if members of the rival congregation would consider their allegiances honestly, they would promptly switch them and that, consequently, they prefer to pretend there is no issue.

In spite of its disproportionate smallness, the Jewish community of Albuquerque can hardly be said to be unique. One might perhaps have expected a somewhat more singular development from the fact that Jews in New Mexico have always been identified with the "Anglos," but the only apparent result of this is that the community of Albuquerque is much like the ones in older and smaller Midwestern cities—well-integrated and almost indistinguishable from the community at large. The ubiquitous frontier tolerance which made it possible and comfortable for Jews to fit readily into the early life of the New Mexican territory, is ingrained in the Jewish community as well. There are no significant social barriers within the community, nor is there any sort of common consciousness of separateness from "the others." The Jewish stranger to Albuquerque, vaguely anticipating some kind of unique Jewish way of life in a context so scenically, historically, and climatically spectacular, might well be disappointed when he finds that Albuquerque, after all, falls into a familiar pattern.

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# THE PUBLIC VOICE: REMARKS ON POETRY TODAY

## *The Reality of Verse*

FRANCIS GOLFFING and BARBARA GIBBS

THE prototypes of current American poetry are well known: William Butler Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, William Empson, W. H. Auden; to a lesser extent, Robert Frost and Marianne Moore. Readers will differ as to the value they place on any one of the poets on our list. Yet few will deny that it was these poets—rather than E. A. Robinson, Emily Dickinson, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, Edna St. Vincent Millay—who have helped determine the style of our epoch. Both groups of writers are distinguished by a consistent attitude toward experience and by strong moral and aesthetic prepossessions. But while the members of the first group have succeeded in becoming exemplars, those of the second have not. Why this should be so it would certainly be worth while to inquire. Our own inquiry must take the actual situation for granted and ask a different question: what has been the effect of these exemplary writers on a succeeding generation? What have they been able to hand down in the way of formal and intellectual discipline, of moral insight, of human scope or passion? And one further question: has their influence been on the whole liberating or restrictive?

Each of the writers we have mentioned succeeded, at the height of his poetic practice, in projecting a certain structure of experience with great accuracy and power. It was their controlled idiosyncrasy that gave them distinction: a sure yet wholly individual grasp of what is central to the human condition, combined with a technical prowess which, while its extent would vary from case to case, was always remarkable. This possession—strict adequacy of form to experience, adjustment of matter to manner—could never, in the nature of things become a legacy: in the field of non-material values you cannot (luckily) bequeath an undivided fortune. What our exemplars passed on to their heirs was something partial yet most valuable nonetheless: a way of seeing, a manner of composition; let the individual beneficiary make of it what he can.

It is here that the usual irony of bequests comes into play. The burden is on the heir to make what he received over in his own image; unless he does precisely that, he will be unable to benefit from the grant. The fact that spiritual grants are transmitted in portions only further aggravates the situation: what is the young poet to do who inherits a way of seeing, a manner of composition, without the master's idiosyncrasy which made them one? At first the answer seems simple enough: develop his own idiosyncrasy—what use to him would be another man's idiosyncrasy, assuming that it could be transmitted? The very idea of making over someone else's idiosyncrasy is preposterous.

Put in this paradoxical way, it certainly does sound preposterous. Yet the idea of writing in the manner of Stevens, or looking at the world through the eyes of Pound, without being either Pound or Stevens, strikes one as more preposterous still. The

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FRANCIS GOLFFING and BARBARA GIBBS examine the newest styles in American poetry for their innovations in technique and for their implicit assumptions about society and the real world. Mr. Golffing, who is a professor of English at Bennington College, and a poet as well as a critic, contributes frequently to COMMENTARY. Barbara Gibbs published two collections of verse last year: *The Green Chapel* and *Poems Written in Berlin.*



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young poet who accepts this dubious legacy is committed, at worst, to travesty; at best, to pastiche. Neither solution makes any sense, except as an exercise; and one soon tires of exercises.

WE PROPOSE that this was the exact dilemma which confronted the young poets starting up in the early 40's, both here and in Britain. (The dilemma has continued to exist, for a good many, throughout the 50's.) The only way out of the dilemma was (and still is) to construct poetic models that would be largely independent of what the masters of the preceding generation had furnished.

One of the earliest of these new models to reach the market—Richard Wilbur's sinuous, polished stanzas—had an instantaneous and, let us add, with no prejudice to its originator, a *disastrous* success. Quite recently, and at the opposite end of the scale, that success has been matched, or overmatched, by Allen Ginsberg's model-poem, *Howl*. (What the effect of Ginsberg's brilliant invention on the state of American verse will be is an open question. The view of poetry he represents we shall discuss presently.) These two successes, in conjunction, suggest the following: first, readers will put up with imitative poetry for a very long time, but not indefinitely. Second, for any new poetic model to take hold, it is imperative that its producer be sure both of his means and his ends. Third, the latest model, in order to be successful, must be the polar opposite of the model preceding it.

Our last axiom, all readers of contemporary poetry will agree, perfectly fits the model of the San Francisco school in relation to that of, say, Richard Wilbur. But does it fit Wilbur's own model in relation to the one directly preceding it—the one developed by Auden? (Empson's brilliant poetic model, which is contemporary with Auden's, never gained wide currency and was soon reduced to absurdity by its scattered exploiters. The same, or almost the same, may be said of a somewhat later exemplar, Dylan Thomas. Though greatly admired and envied, Thomas's verse did not lend itself to imitation or other types of manipulation, except at the hands of fools.) We think that the axiom fits the second case quite as aptly as it did the first. Wilbur's type of poem, despite its suavity and finish—or because of it—rocked the raw poetic scene of the 40's. A silken bombshell, it landed among the shrapnel fragments—now dead—of traumatic speculation, ideological recrimination and self-examination, in the manner of Auden and Eliot, clearing the poetic landscape both elegantly and thoroughly of the clutter left behind by social consciousness on its retreat. And by its ally, psychology. The poetry of Wilbur and his fellows was built to consecrate pleasure, not hurt; pursuit of happiness through metaphor was its sole aim, and it achieved that aim with no apparent difficulty, with no flexing of muscles or other ostentation. On its first appearance in print, poetry readers (including one of the present writers) heaved a sigh of relief: how good it felt to breathe the pure air of Parnassus again, after so much gas, gasoline, and other miasma! Nobody seemed bothered by the extraordinary number of things, concerns, ideas that this new poetry left out of account; clearly, the age was ripe for hedonism, ready for *la promesse du bonheur* after putting up so long with the prophets of doom and disaster.

Certain technical resemblances of this new poetic model to Auden's lyrical productions must be discounted as trivial. There is no doubt that the new "formalists" profited from Auden's example and that they felt great respect for his craft, especially for his extraordinary deftness in the shorter forms. But the outlook is so different that it hardly seems necessary to labor the point. In his lyrics Auden relaxes, somewhat nervously, from his more strenuous enterprises; yet even his slightest lyric is instinct with dialectical tension, ideological malaise. The Wilbur type of poem may move us with its genuine pathos (e. g. "The Death of a Toad") but it is neither equipped nor desirous to deal with the human situation in its appalling complexity. A poem like Auden's "In Father's Footsteps" is entirely out of the compass of our young university wits.

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IN THIS part of the essay we will take for granted that poetry has, potentially, a bearing on the lives and pleasures of people (other than poets or professional critics). Then when we speak of what it *is* and the many questions and doubts that exist on this score, we are hoping to assure, or reassure, those who might naturally seek that pasture but have been kept off latterly by what one might refer to as terrifying electric fences. To start with, let us take the metaphor of fences and see how it applies to the history of Western European poetry, including our own. There is undoubtedly something to suspect about poetry in its very nature, as was recognized almost from the beginning. A poem looks like life, yet isn't, *can't*, be either the thing it resembles, or even, in a statistical sense, an accurate diagram or projection of it. (There are people to whom this argument in itself is sufficient to condemn poetry. It becomes, for them, a kind of cheap sham or deliberate mystification, or out-and-out lie. However, these people have never, even now, succeeded in prevailing over a whole society to outlaw poetry or destroy its power utterly. This in itself is proof of its vitality, especially today when the balance has shifted so far in the direction of the scientists who, one would sometimes think, are even prepared to give over the old hotbed of language in exchange for a drier, more accurate set of symbols.) Therefore, in the very nature of language a separation exists, which we may call, if we like, a fence. This is more impenetrable than any real fence, since it never has been, and never will be broken through. A poem can never become a thing, or a thing a poem. (We will avoid here the problem of whether or not a poem can *effect* anything, i.e. change the status quo).

Now, how have poets felt in the past, and how do they feel today about this "fence" which places them, in one fundamental respect, "outside" of life, or reality, or what you may please to call it? We would suggest that in the beginning—say, the beginnings of poetry in English—this problem didn't worry them too much. They accepted the situation as a matter of course, considered what they made a copy or mirror-image of the world, took pleasure in making the copy as elegant or delightful as they could—or even as somber, terrifying, profound, contorted, funny, or what have you—and their readers understood this and asked no better. Later it became necessary for poets to argue with themselves and with their readers, pointing out that poetry "refreshes," "uplifts," "holds the mirror up to nature," or performs any one of a number of useful functions in society. However, as arguments do, these began to sound stale and wear thin. Poets blushed to repeat the old tags and began looking around for newer and newer justifications.

Now this is just about where most of us (you, our readers, and we, as poets *and* readers) came in. The arguments proliferated, becoming harder and harder to follow and to distinguish one from the other, and poets settled down for a period to providing lay figures whereon this or that argument might be demonstrated (we don't mean this absolutely, of course: a number of fine poems slipped through, but they were written under considerable anguish of uncertainty, and often dubiously received). The entire area of poetry and of readers' responses to it was beset with confusion, principally having to do with the role of morality in poetry and with the manner in which the moral concern, once it is admitted as legitimate, should be defined. Confusion arose, for example, over what would be the precise nature of the moral desideratum in a world that is no longer ruled by explicit moral categories or injunctions.

Things were made worse, rather than better, by attempts on the part of certain critics and poet-critics (F. R. Leavis, Yvor Winters) to rehabilitate some of the older moral modes and enjoin their use upon the literary practitioner, threatening him with the wrath of the Muse or with inevitable neglect by future ages in case of non-compliance. They were muddled further by uncertainties of reference: is morality essentially a

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matter of ordering your own experience, prior to the poetic act (Yvor Winters, J. V. Cunningham)? Does it inhere in the very act of composition (Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom)? Or does it, perhaps, have nothing at all to do with internal developments but rather with a strong sense of the common condition, of what binds a man to his fellow —a concept closely allied with such notions as respect, human warmth, broad sympathies, public spirit (Randall Jarrell, following Whitman; influence of Sartre)? The embarrassments arising, for both the poet and his audience, from this welter of possible moralities are sufficiently obvious. On their own admission, both Yvor Winters and Marianne Moore believed in, and operated out of, a central moral consciousness, but was there any congruence between these two moral worlds? Did they meet at any point? did they partially overlap? could they be translated into one another, despite their seeming dissimilarity?

CLOSELY related to the quandaries just mentioned were others, which on the face of it seemed to be of a purely formal nature. Should poetry exploit a single theme, or conceit, or should it move freely along the scale of experience, without concern for classical exposition? Disagreements about the role of "digression" in poetry might strike the layman as highly technical, while in reality they projected once more conflicting views of the moral function of poetry—well camouflaged to be sure. The "public-spirited" moralist supported the poet's right to digress, or at least condoned such licenses, while the "private" moralist censured them severely. Since neither of them was likely to speak in the figure of moralist, but rather in that of literary critic, nine out of ten readers were bound to be confused. (There was, of course, always the possibility that the critics themselves might become confused on a score as complex as this—an excusable but hardly helpful circumstance. Moreover, though the intent to deceive was perhaps rare, a certain amount of deliberate muddying of the waters prevailed in the process of covering up one's moralizing activities, or passing them off as "only" literary criticism.)*

This sort of thing having gone on long enough, there began to be restless stirrings of revolt (indeed these had never stopped from the first beginnings of high intellectualization). Poets as well as readers were heard to mutter, or shout, or whisper that poetry was being strangled by criticism, or "internalized," made inaccessible, unpalatable, put (ironically, in all this welter of concern with morality) completely out of touch with the world that is not poetry. This brings us more or less up to the present day, and we propose to examine some of the ways in which poets have attempted to meet what seems to them, and to many readers, or would-be readers, a crisis in the life of poetry itself.

To recapitulate briefly: In this matter of the "fence" or limit dividing the poem in some existential way from what we will loosely call "life," the attitude of the poet has shifted in somewhat the following manner. Poets first *assumed* the virtue of their "copies" of life, then *demonstrated* it by argument, then reversed the field (during the Romantic period), placing a higher value on the poem than on the experience, then gradually lost faith altogether, whereupon they took to

*Nor was the "regular form" versus "rhythmic freedom" issue wholly understandable without recourse to the realm of moral notions. Considerable caution ought to be exercised, however, in making assumptions about the conversion from moral to aesthetic whenever purely formal properties are involved. Some of the English and American prototypes of free verse (T. E. Hulme, H. D., the early Pound) stand outside any moral constellation, being composed on principles of aesthetic self-sufficiency; to read moral implications of any kind into the tenets of Imagism would be to skate on thin ice indeed. Yvor Winters' restrictive moral canon is as evident in his early free verse as it is in his later tight stanzas: what conversion there has been is of a strictly internal, developmental kind. Perhaps the one obvious correlation in the area of formal structure is that between the handsome strophes (often handsome to the point of lusciousness) of our new university wits and their frankly epicurean moral outlook. Their equally pronounced penchant for elegant fancies and carefully elaborated conceits, while seemingly pointing to a quite different position—that of formal autonomy, aestheticism—can, and we think must, be seen as further evidence of a consistent hedonism.

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making intellectual subtleties to shore up what seemed to them a crumbling position. And now, at this very moment, it seems that two things are happening, each of which develops out of the foregoing but in different directions: namely, that poets are seeking, in one gut-bursting effort, to finally break through that "fence" which has plagued them through the centuries and has become unbearable, and on the other hand they are, at the same time, finding courage to simply assert the value of poetry through the act of writing it.

Let us consider the first of these propositions first, that the modern poem exhibits the need to break the tegument of form—to leave an opening, as Navajo rug weavers are said to leave a "break" in the pattern to let the spirit come in, but in this case for life, or the real, to enter the poem. That this is by no means a new development we all know. Both Proust and Joyce must have had something of the sort in mind. In a provocative essay in *Kenyon Review* (Spring 1959) Albert Cook describes a method of composition that he calls "diffusion," for which he cites examples as far back as Baudelaire and Emily Dickinson. And certainly Pound has been occupied all along with the overpassing of limits, including this one between the poem and its "subject." However, as a "movement" channeling the energies of a generation of writers it is, at least in America, new.

But how can such a thing be even attempted, since put in this light it is a manifest, absurd impossibility? Some of the following ways have been tried and are being tried:

I. By breaking down the *logical* or *necessary* requirement of "plot." Plot, at its strictest, is a kind of net containing the poem. It is an artifice which corresponds to nothing in life, and presumably if it is loosened, made less logical, less inevitable a development, more of life will somehow seep in through the gaps or weak points. Admittedly this is highly metaphorical, yet poetically it makes sense. Well-known ways in which this weakening of plot has been effected are (1) the use of stream-of-consciousness, in which the point of view remains intact but everything else dissolves; (2) the Poundean fluidity in which *the human consciousness,* as it has left its record through history, literature, and art, replaces the individual consciousness; and (3) the admission of the private, the unexplained reference, the unattached proper name, what Yvor Winters has called "pseudo-reference." Instead of careful clues, strict order of development in which one thing is seen to lead to another, we find the bafflement of clues pointing in contrary directions, or a single clue capable of diverse interpretation, and these contraries are deliberately left unresolved. Proper names are introduced as though the reader were acquainted with the character meant, but no clue is given, etc., etc.

Under any of these schemes it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to determine relevancy. Anything goes, as regards what is to "come next." In the first, a forward flow in time is maintained and individual limits of experience are assumed, in the second and third even these guiding principles vanish.

II. By making the poem "occasional" in a new sense, not a polished decoration for a festive (or mournful) occasion, but something closer to a "throwaway," a rough jotting to serve a given purpose, convey a certain message, but with no attempt to achieve more than a roughly adequate form. A great deal of the poetry (by young serious writers) which one reads in English periodicals today is of this kind. It is not felt to be an inferior kind of poetry by those who write it. On the contrary, its roughness is felt to be a guarantee of its relatedness to the "real" world. Take the poem, "The Short Life of Kazuo Yamamoto," from a book pointedly entitled *Bread Rather than Blossoms,* by D. J. Enright:

*At the age of thirteen, you passed by the park*
*of Nakanoshima, you paused by the Public*
*Library with its well-fed shelves.*
*The queue outside could have kept you for*
*weeks,*

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*Except that students shine their shoes themselves.*
*You swallowed the rat poison, all the easier for having a healthy appetite,*
*And died with admirable definition. Your last words*
*Were even reported in the papers. 'I wanted to die*
*Because of a headache.' The policeman took it down, adding that you were quite*
*Alone and had no personal belongings, other than a headache.*
*Elsewhere the great ones have their headaches, too,*
*As they grapple with those notable tongue-twisters*
*Such as Liberation and Oppression.*
*But they were not talking about you,*
*Kazuo, who found rat poison cheaper than aspirin.*

An unmistakable polish *does*, in fact, adhere to these lines, yet might we not suggest that if the poet had known any way of getting rid of it, while keeping the poem a poem, he would have done so?

III. By luxuriating in the private and sensational at the expense of "plot." The poem might be conceived as an orgasm, or a series of orgasms, expressed in words like "Wow," "Bomb," and nonsense-syllables, sputterings, pseudo-puns (ones where the second meaning has no relevance). The poet attempts to *do away* with the "one remove," the imitation. The poem becomes, or is meant to become, the experience itself. (For a long time the poem has been *an* experience —since it ceased being a *mirror*, an *essay*, etc.—but an experience of itself, of a poem. Now it becomes something more violent and immediate, the flesh made word.) It hardly seems necessary to quote examples of what is meant here. The reader is referred to *Howl, and Other Poems* by Allen Ginsberg, *Gasoline* and *Bomb* by Gregory Corso, "Old Angel Midnight" (*Big Table*, Vol. 1, No. 1) by Jack Kerouac.

IV. By the technique referred to above as "diffusion" (Albert Cook), or what is called by Charles Olson "composition by field," in his excellent essay "Projective Verse." Mr. Olson's description of this approach to the act of writing is as follows: "The objects which occur at every given moment of composition (of recognition, we can call it) are, can be, must be treated exactly as they do occur, therein and not by any ideas or preconceptions from outside the poem, must be handled as a series of objects in field in such a way that a series of tensions (which they also are) are made to *hold* and to hold exactly inside the content and the context of the poem which has forced itself, through the poet and them, into being." No finer example of the kind of poetry that may result than Mr. Olson's own poem "The Lordly and Isolate Satyrs" (*Evergreen Review*, No. 4) could be wished for. The poem is, unfortunately, too long to quote.

In somewhat less technical language one might say that the poet simply delivers himself up to an experience, embracing memory, sensation, event, with no attempt to interpret, select, or guide the poem except as it "happens." (Obviously selection occurs, but on other grounds than the traditional ones). Here the focus is as much on the unintermitted releasing of energy as on the poem which results therefrom. The poem may be seen as a kind of seismographic line, recording the transmission of energy.

IT WILL be noticed that some of these ways of making gaps in the tegument of a poem relate to formal concepts, others not. Also that there is contained in this list of four "ways" a certain historical development. Stream-of-consciousness preceded the Poundian development and in a sense opened the way for it, as well as for the "Bomb" school of irrelevancy. "Pseudo-reference" and "diffusion" (or "composition by field") have long been available to and used by poets, but have never, perhaps, seemed so expressive of an epoch as now—and as between these, pseudo-reference is Eliotesque and fading, whereas "composition by field" is still fraught with possibility at this very moment. "Occasional" reflects an attitude or belief on the part of poets about their function in so-

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ciety as much as any questions internal to poetry.

As to the second part of our proposition, that poets are, at the same time that they are seeking to break through the "fence" and make points of contact between the poem and what the poem is about, or between art and "the real," also finding courage to simply assert the value of poetry through the act of writing it (as they have done in the past, and must in the end, again do), for testimony we have, among many others, the affirming voice of Mr. Kerouac: "the total turningabout & deep revival of world robe-flowing literature till it shd be something a man'd put his eyes on & continually read for the sake of reading & for the sake of the Tongue . . ." ("Old Angel Midnight").

Against this prevailing conception of what the contemporary poem should be like (strongly determined by the examples of Pound and W. C. Williams), i.e. that it must not erect formal "fences" between itself and experience but should sweep a "field" of experience, in the manner of a searchlight, the small, well-made poem—autotelic, sufficient unto itself—has managed to hold out with surprising stubbornness. This stubbornness becomes less surprising when we consider, first, the widespread fear of chaos among large segments of our civilization—a fear to which the "sheltered" type of poet would be peculiarly susceptible. More importantly, a certain kind of aesthetic satisfaction, or sense of completeness, is associated with the second type that is difficult, perhaps impossible, to secure with the first. Between these two extremes of poetic practice we find a large spectrum of compromise solutions, of varying interest. The names of Theodore Roethke, Robert Lowell, and Howard Nemerov come readily to mind here. Each of these poets has tried to come to terms with both worlds of poetry, rather than electing one of them for exclusive cultivation. Roethke has used fairly consistently a "shuttle" technique between the two modes, and in so doing has laid by turns Yeats, Eliot, and Auden under heavy contribution. Lowell has lately begun to stretch his tight molds in an attempt to achieve more rapid shifts of both mood and linguistic pitch within the single poem; these attempts, we believe, have so far been only partially successful. Nemerov (and, to a lesser extent, Stanley Kunitz) have tried to loosen or expand the classical model from within, by allowing the discursive impetus a freer rein and thus inviting the poem to take its own, rather than a predetermined, shape

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TO GLANCE briefly toward the future: there are numerous indications that genres have outlived their usefulness and that poetry readers will come to center their attention increasingly on the nature of language, as symbology. The day may not be far off when a man may call himself a poet and write what he calls poems, and no one shall challenge him. Or all genre-words will disappear. This, for some, will be a happy day, for others not so happy; and we are referring here to both poets and readers.

But how about the greatest crux of all: the poet and the commonwealth? Poetry, like everything else, is a function of society. Yet, in however limited a sense, the relation can be reversed: poetry is a civilizing agent, and to the extent that it civilizes us is "society-making" (as distinguished from "group" or "coterie-making")—or should be. The adage that every society has the poetry it deserves is but a half-truth, both defeatist and unfair in placing the blame for intellectual and moral failure exclusively on the poet's audience, rather than on both poet and reader. The complementary sentence reads: "Every poet has the society he deserves." This, instead of acquiescence in the status quo, is a challenge. If the poets of today don't like what our society offers them in the way of an audience, they must discover the nucleus of a new audience, which would also be the nucleus of a new civilization. For the first time in many years there are signs that such a new audience may be in the making.

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# CEDARS OF LEBANON

## A YIDDISH TALE OF CHIVALRY

*From the Boba Buch*

We offer below a selection from a classic of Yiddish folk literature, the famous *Boba Buch* (or *Bova Buch*) of Elijah Bahur. So far as we know, this is the first translation into English of any part of the 16th-century romance which continued to delight its Jewish readers for literally hundreds of years; whole sections of it entered into the popular mythology, and its phrases were freely incorporated into the popular idiom—for example, *boba maaseh* itself—"old wives' tale."

Like many of the medieval Yiddish chapbooks designed to entertain the Jews shut up in their ghettos, the *Boba Buch* was a free and highly imaginative rendering of a Christian tale, this one from the popular Italian literature. Naturally, very little that happens in Elijah Bahur's version of the original chivalric romance could have happened to a Jew living in his medieval ghetto, and it was this distance from the actual which insured the book's enormous success. To get to know in fantasy the outside Christian world of chivalry was, to put it in the characteristic idiom of the *Boba Buch* itself, like "dancing at someone else's wedding." Bahur put into his book the racy colloquial Yiddish of his day, interspersing it, with great comic effect, with deliberately distorted Biblical and Talmudic phrases; and of course it is the actual Jewish way of life that we see interwoven with the alien chivalric elements: the Queen, for example, observes the traditional seven days of sitting *shiva* for the King she has had murdered.

To Elijah Bahur, his *Boba Buch* was in the direct line of popular Jewish literature going back to the legends of the Talmud. Quite matter of factly, the first edition of the *Boba Buch* ends with the classic formula: "Concluded is the tractate of Boba Dantona."

With the gradual changing of the popular language, the Yiddish of the first version of the *Boba Buch* came finally to be unintelligible to its readers—in something like the way Chaucer has become too difficult for the ordinary reader. Consequently, later authors at various periods took the liberty of rewriting the original medieval romance in the more modern style of their own day. N. B. Minkoff, in his book on Elijah Bahur, tells us that as late as 1909-10 there appeared new editions of the *Boba Buch* in Vilna, and there may have been still later versions.

Most recently, J. I. Trunk re-edited the *Boba Buch* for modern Yiddish literature—and his rendering must be counted as a *tour de force*. The translation here given, which I have prepared, is of a section from Mr. Trunk's work—it appeared as part of his book *Kvalen un Beimer* ("Wells and Trees"), published by the Ferlag Unser Tsait in 1958.

One final word about the style of the original *Boba Buch*: it was written in *ottova rima*, an Italian stanza of eight eleven-syllabic lines, rhyming as *a b a / a b c c*. In my translation of the modern Yiddish version, I have followed Mr. Trunk, rhyming only occasionally, when the material lent itself.—Jacob Sloan.

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*The old king Hertzik Gvidon and his young wife Brandonia. Boba is born, though the old man is cold behind the ears.*

Once there was a king, whose name was Hertzik Gvidon, and he was an old man. The Evil Urge goaded him on to marrying a virgin maid, and her name was Brandonia. Within the year she lay in childbirth and made a *bris* for her first-born son, and he was named Boba [Bova].

Not far from the capital city where the King Hertzik Gvidon lived, there stretched a deep forest, in the middle of which stood an ancient and gloomy castle surrounded by all kinds of walls and turrets and deep moats. The castle was called Shanushuman,



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and the only way you could get to it was over drawbridges that were always raised. The King Hertzik Gvidon had his treasures hidden in the castle. The castellan, who was called Sini-bald, was a mighty warrior, one who could single-handed dispatch a whole army, and Sini-bald was true to the old King unto death.

To this same Sini-bald, in the castle Shanushuman, the King entrusted his only son Boba, that he might teach him to fight, to shoot, and to ride, and all necessary military tactics.

The lad grew mightily—by the time Boba was ten years old he had dispatched three burly heroes, like flies.

## II

*Then did Brandonia weep and complain: Why, oh why, have I been taken and made pregnant by such a broken vessel?*

The virgin maid Brandonia, whom the King Hertzik Gvidon had taken out of her rags and tatters and made a queen, was one of those sweet little women: "may they be sown far and wide and yield a meager crop." She was false and devious, like the Primal Serpent. It was the Evil Urge that made her for the King, body and soul, his darling mistress.

Now she looked around her and saw the lords and generals who doffed their hats when she appeared. Pure blood and milk were they. Then she looked again and saw her husband the King, already an aged man and sickly in the loins. All night long he lay coughing next to her in bed. And she spake in her heart—said she to herself: "What good to me is such an old broken vessel, and such a broken fiddle as this?"

Later, she looked at her son Boba. And once again she spake in her heart—thought she to herself: "By such a broken vessel I was taken and became pregnant, and this is the fruit, this is the song."

Her thoughts grew darker and darker.

## III

*The false wife sniffs the Evil Urge's incense, And she spake in her heart: "Now, God willing, I shall share the golden wedding broth with General Ritzer."*

When an evil woman's concocting, things begin to brew. King Solomon, of blessed memory—that was something he knew and knew. He had enough experience with them—false wives, that is. They made his head reel, although at first he thought he could be happy with so many. Later he told all about it, poor fellow, in his Proverbs book.

And she raised her eyes—that sly creature Brandonia, who had gone in rags and tatters and now wore garments of gold—she raised her eyes up to one of the generals of the royal army. He was blood and milk, called Ritzer.

Queen Brandonia discarded all womanly shame, and began to cast eyes at the young general.

The Evil Urge played her tune on his fiddle—and the general twirled his mustache ends. What it means when a general—blood and milk—twirls his mustache ends, there's no sense wasting good paper and ink in telling.

Then did she whisper—the sly Brandonia whispered a secret into General Ritzer's ear, all the while smiling with the seven smiles of the Primal Serpent. As follows: Let him just see to it that the old dotard Terah be dispatched to his forefathers—may he there bask in Paradise!—then she and he together, she and the murderer, that is—would share the golden wedding broth, and she would make him king.

Now if the Serpent was able to talk so righteous a woman as Mother Eve into eating one little apple from the Tree of Knowledge—could he not talk a general, all blood and milk, into becoming a king?

General Ritzer spoke softly into her ear, into the Queen Brandonia's ear: "Fear not, your Majesty. The old man will soon be baking bagels underground, with my help. Only see to it that he comes hunting with me in the forest."

## IV

*The Queen feigns sickness. Old Gvidon rides off to the hunt. His young wife has a craving for sweet fawns'-flesh or the like. Ritzer dispatches the old man to Paradise. A fine funeral.*

Queen Brandonia wasted no time in thought; straight off, making herself out to be sick, she took to bed, and screamed that she was "all choked up inside."

Enter the King—the old King Hertzik

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Gvidon came to pay his young wife a sick call. Lovingly, he asked her how she felt.

"If I can't have a piece of roast deer flesh," yammered the Queen, "what's my life worth? I'll end up dead, and you can go looking for another queen."

Old King Gvidon knew all about the cravings young wives have at certain times. Had her time come again? wondered Hertzik Gvidon with joy. "And if I don't give her deer flesh, mightn't she miscarry?—God forbid!"

Then the King assembled his followers, including all his generals. They mounted their milk-white steeds. They took along a pack of hunting dogs. Old Hertzik Gvidon rode his favorite horse, and on his hand he perched his favorite sparrow-hark. The hawk was a keen hunter, who had caught beasts hidden in places where no general could find them.

The retinue rode off into the forest, amid the trumpeting of trumpets and blowing of horns. The pack raced on ahead. The King's sparrow-hawk seized a little fawn, right in the act of suckling at its mother's teats. General Ritzer drew his bow, supposedly to shoot the deer. But he aimed straight at the King's heart, and the pointing arrow flew true.

Then perished the King—King Hertzik Gvidon fell from his horse, dead. "And the city of Shushan was disconsolate"—they hung all the mirrors in the capital with sheets, and old Hertzik Gvidon had a fine funeral.

## V

*Ritzer and Brandonia do think and fret both night and day:*
*Oh, that they might live to see Boba put away!*

And it came to pass on the morrow after the seven days of mourning were over that Queen Brandonia rose from the mourner's stool. Her sharp little tongue was soon arguing with the seventy counselors of the King that it would be only right to break dishes and lead her under the marriage canopy with General Ritzer. Firstly—argued she—you can't just take a young woman and let her sit around an everlasting widow. Secondly: you can't leave the throne empty as an attic.

She had a real false shrew's tongue, simply rolling in honey. And then she made up to them with all kinds of womanly charms. The Evil Urge played her tune on his fiddle. In brief, I the author don't know for sure what each of the seventy counselors thought to himself—but all of them suddenly hit on the same idea. They began twirling their mustache ends.

They twirled and they twirled until there was a big wedding. Soon after the Seven Benedictions of Marriage, the murderer Ritzer became emperor.

And the wrath of the king subsided.—The wicked Brandonia and General Ritzer were lovey-dovey to one another. Now Queen Brandonia had a man entirely blood and milk, and not some old broken vessel coughing away all night.

And it came to pass when the king was seated—when they were sitting cozily together, eating from each other's lips, King Ritzer spoke to Queen Brandonia as follows:

"Last night I dreamed," said the murderer, "that the darling boy Boba you had with that old Terah dotard of a husband of yours came from the castle Shanushuman in the forest. He chopped my head off and became emperor. On account of this dream, soul of mine, I couldn't shut an eye all night."

Sly Brandonia was, after all, as bad as the Primal Serpent. She couldn't bear the thought that she had been made pregnant by a man who was a broken vessel, and so that wicked woman stretched her darling lips into a charming smile and said to King Ritzer, said she:

"Don't you eat your heart out, kitten. I'll bring the dear boy here and poison him off like a mouse."

And **the** thing found favor in the eyes of the King—Ritzer gave her a kiss on the cheek, and lined up his troops, and sent them off to the forest to the castle Shanushuman to bring back Boba.

## VI

*What a consternation was there!*
*We are treating of war now, we're not at the Leipzig Fair;*
*We're not buying and selling sheep's hides.*
*We're hacking with halberds on every which side.*
*Blood is running—like the Red Sea tide.*

Now we—I the author and you the read-

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ers, that is—know that Lord Sini-bald was the castellan of Shanushuman, where he was tutoring Boba in military tactics—to fight, to ride, and to shoot. Sinibald was one of those truthful men of yore who had no truck with falsehoods. He knew in his heart, poor fellow, all the evil that was done under the sun, and how the murderer Ritzer had crept up to the Emperor's stool, and that it had been a plot between Ritzer and the young Queen to get rid of the old King.

So he thought it over, did Sini-bald, and hauled up the drawbridges in front of the castle Shanushuman. He put on a black suit of steel armor, and he put a black suit of steel armor on Boba. Both of them girded on their swords and bows and arrows and waited for Ritzer's troops that had been sent to bring Boba back, by peaceful persuasion, if they could. Supposedly, his sweet darling mother was dying to see her dear boy. But Prince Sini-bald was no fool, and he saw through the whole play-act from A to Z.

The troops appeared, on foot and on horseback. They were armed with swords and halberds, and armored in steel and iron. Their captain, called Amalek, ordered the alarm horn sounded, and announced to Sinibald the reason they had come: he was to give the king's son, Boba, over to them.

Sini-bald said: N-O—no.

Generals aren't fond of long confabulations. Amalek ordered the battle horn blown, and the fighting began.

They hacked away with swords and halberds. The forest echoed with the sound of steel swords knocking on steel armor. Sinibald and Boba—they were two against two thousand—chopped off heads like cabbage. Horses and soldiers wallowed in blood. Sinibald got an arrow in the back, and fell heavily wounded.

Boba was left alone with his trusty blade. But now he showed what he had learned in Prince Sini-bald's one-room "cheder," and that his hands weren't cramped like a woman's in labor. All by himself he went on to chop off about three hundred heads. At last, however, he threw in his hand, and cried out, "I pass!"

They bound his hands with chains of gold. The few troops that were left, those that could still breathe, led him off to the beating of drums and the fifing of fifes, to the royal court and his mother Brandonia.

Down on the more than nine hundred armored corpses lying in front of the castle Shanushuman, the crows descended from the trees and the sparrow-hawks from the sky. Dumah, the Angel of Death, came, too, with his whip of fire. A flock of vultures held a splendid banquet.

[*A second excerpt from the* Boba Buch *will appear in a following issue.*—Ed.]

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# LETTERS FROM READERS

## Elliot E. Cohen

To the Editor of Commentary:

Your June issue calls readers' attention to the death of the one who conceived Commentary. I am not acquainted with any personality connected with this magazine, but the stimulating quality of the various items in its monthly repertoire would lead me to second all that was said of the originating spirit and to add that the crystallization of his dream has been a great success.

My own work as an editor makes me not unaware of the drain on one's intuition, critical acumen, and technical competence that accompanies articles which later seem to be merely taken for granted. The intellectual exercise that I have experienced in the reading of Commentary has always prompted me to recall that some gifted person or persons were doing some excellent work of selecting, producing, and combining behind the scenes. A reader, such as I, nourishes his mind on the finished product, but someone else has done all the work. . . .

These comments, therefore, may gain in their power of appreciation to the late editor precisely because they rest on the record of performance rather than on personal knowledge of the man. I hope this germinal magazine will long continue to give me cause for inspiration, disagreement, appreciation, and mental expansion.

(Dr.) Douglas J. Wilson
The Montreal Star
Montreal, Canada

To the Editor of Commentary:

The untimely passing of Elliot E. Cohen has left a void in American Jewish life which is all the more tragic because the full dimensions of the loss may not be adequately appreciated.

I met Elliot Cohen in the early 20's, when he was the leader of a group of gifted young men who were endowing the *Menorah Journal* with a vitality and honesty of purpose unique in American Jewish journalism and all too rare elsewhere. He was already distinguished then by his extraordinary mastery of the English language and his capacity for trenchant utterance, gifts that were to make him one of the great editors of our day. The pages of Commentary offer striking testimony to his unusual competence in this field.

Basically, however, Elliot Cohen's quality was ethical and not merely aesthetic. He was concerned not only with *le mot juste,* but with *la pensée vraie.* He might well have taken as his motto the great saying of Johnson which seems so remote from the temper of our day, "Rid your mind of cant." He could not brook deception, particularly its most dangerous form, self-deception.

The other day I reread his unforgettable piece, "The Age of Brass," which, after a quarter of a century, still retains its freshness and power. It deserves to be reprinted for our generation as do others of his all too infrequent writings. To be sure, this piece, which is in a sense an *apologia pro vita sua* written at the inception of his career, breathes a confidence in the power of knowledge and a respect for the human intelligence which is no longer fashionable in this day of frenzied faiths. It is all the more necessary and relevant on this account. Writing before Hitler and the spawn of philosophies that have emerged either as a consequence or as a reaction to that holocaust of irrationality, he expressed his conviction that only intellectual and moral integrity has the capacity to save the Jewish community in particular and mankind in general.

Through the years, there were many issues on which one felt constrained to differ with him, but there never was any doubt concerning his clarity of thought, his sincerity of purpose, his dedication to the life of the spirit, and above all, his deep desire to make Jewish life in America worthy both of the wisdom of its past and its potentialities for the future.

Elliot Cohen would surely make no claim to traditional piety, yet in view of the basic Biblical command to cleave to God and walk in His ways, was he not the faithful servant of the Holy One whose seal, the Sages tell us, is truth?

Robert Gordis
The Jewish Theological Seminary
New York City



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To the Editor of Commentary:

I remember—it was some years ago.

Elliot Cohen's father came up to New York from an incongruous Alabama to visit Elliot.

One day we were sitting around with the old Southern gentleman, and Elliot was telling him about his work. The elder Cohen listened attentively, he was very interested. After a while, when Elliot had finished, Mr. Cohen smiled a slow smile and he, in turn, began telling about himself, about his pre-Alabama days back in Lithuania.

The Jewish people back there could, of course, read and write Yiddish. And Hebrew too. But few, if any, whether Jewish or not, were literate in Lithuanian. Mr. Cohen could write Lithuanian, and so he quite automatically became that important, nearly-official public figure, the letter-writer for the community. He told of writing business letters, letters of application, letters to the authorities, and all manner of personal letters, even some about love.

"And now," he said to Elliot, "it's all come a full circle for us Cohens. You are the letter-writer for your community."

Well—that's what Elliot Cohen really was. The letter-writer for so many of us. The articulator of what, without him, would not be articulated. The clarifier of what, without him, would not be quite clear. The brightener of what, without him, would be only dim. He gave . . . form, and sometimes wings, to the thinking and the ideas of so many of us.

And so there are many of us who are going to miss his wit and his warmth and the toughness of his mind and his tough intolerance of shoddiness—all those things that were there when he was writing our letters.

So many of us are going to miss him.

Albert Margolies

New York City

## Jewish Law

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a rabbi of Orthodox Judaism I must speak up when my tradition is misrepresented, even when this is done without any apparent polemic motivation. I refer to the article "The Limits of People-Centered Judaism" (May) by Jakob Petuchowski.

1. Dr. Petuchowski states that the Orthodox Jew takes "his Judaism as something revealed 'from above' rather than evolved in the historical life-situation of a people." This is an oversimplification. Jewish tradition clearly indicates that certain laws and traditions were "evolved out of the historical life-situation" of the Jewish people. Such are all of the *takkanot*, the *gezerot*, and the *minhagim*. (The tradition requires only that these practices be consistent with the revealed law.)

2. To say that Orthodox Jews have "tacitly given up a full fourth of the Shulchan Aruch: namely, that part of it which deals with civil law," is also misleading. Modern Orthodox Jews take great pride in the contrast between this portion of Jewish law and other current systems of civil law. An editor of the *Yale Law Journal* just this year submitted a thesis on "Human Rights in Jewish Law" and wrote that Jewish law is here "infinitely superior" to Anglo-American common law.

It is true that rabbis are nowadays rarely called upon to adjudicate civil cases, but this is because such cases are rare and because a rabbi will be consulted only when both parties to the suit are committed to obey Jewish law. This latter condition is fulfilled in homogeneously Orthodox Jewish communities—and there the *Choshen Mishpat* remains, indeed, as alive as ever.

3. What basis does Dr. Petuchowski have for saying that "Such *rites de passage* as circumcision, marriage, and burial—become valid only in the presence of a *minyan*"? All of these *mitzvot* are completely valid without a *minyan* according to all of the traditions and authorities of which I am aware.

Joshua Wachtfogel

Jewish Chaplain for Alaska

Dr. Petuchowski *writes:*

I am prepared to concede Rabbi Wachtfogel's third point, and to admit that I may have somewhat overstated my case. Rabbi Wachtfogel is, of course, correct in stating that circumcision, marriage, and burial rites are *legally* valid even when performed without the presence of a *minyan*. Nevertheless, without a *minyan*, it would have to be a marriage service without all of the traditional "Seven Benedictions," and a burial service without the recitation of the *kaddish*. I wonder how *psychologically* "valid" such services would thus be in the minds of the participants. As for circumcision, the Shulchan Aruch (*Yoré De'ah* 265:6) says that, wherever possible, a *minyan* should be in attendance, though, admittedly, a circumcision without a *minyan* is still legally valid. On the whole question of requiring a *minyan* for the *complete* marriage and burial rites, Rabbi Wachtfogel might profitably consult the Babylonian Talmud, *Megillah* 23b. Speaking in Jewish legal terms, my article stated the Jewish position *lekhatechillah* (*a priori*), whereas Rabbi Wachtfogel now informs us what would still be acceptable *di'abhad* (*ex post facto*).

As much as I am prepared to stand corrected

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by Rabbi Wachtfogel's strictures on the third point, I am unable to follow his reasoning on the first two points. The Rabbi takes umbrage at my describing the Orthodox Jew as accepting "his Judaism as something revealed 'from above' rather than evolved in the historical life-situation of a people." He counters this by drawing attention to the existence of *takkanot, gezerot,* and *minhagim.* Admittedly, the human origin of *such* classes of law was accepted by the rabbis of the Talmud. I said so myself in my article on "The Bible of the Synagogue" (COMMENTARY, February 1959, particularly on page 144). But there is a great deal more to Orthodox Judaism than the practices subsumed under those categories. Rabbi Wachtfogel himself stresses the requirement that they must be "consistent with the revealed law." The "revealed law," therefore, is the standard and the criterion, the "constitution," as it were, of which *takkanot, gezerot,* and *minhagim* are merely the "amendments." And the "revealed law," according to rabbinic teaching, existed before the creation of the world. I wonder whether there are many other Orthodox Jews who would deny that their Judaism is something revealed "from above." Certainly, in their polemics against nascent Reform Judaism, such Orthodox authorities as Moses Schreiber and Akiba Eger invested even the *minhagim* with a divinely ordained binding character.

In my article I did not deny that Orthodox Jews take pride in rabbinic civil law. I merely tried to indicate that it was no longer an item of latter-day Orthodox Jewish practice. I have seen Orthodox attempts to foster the dietary laws. I have come across popular tracts seeking to win converts for the *mikveh,* the ritual bath for women. Obviously such appeals were not exclusively addressed to "homogeneously Orthodox Jewish communities." But I have yet to see appeals of similar forcefulness pleading for Jews to settle their civil suits by the decisions of Jewish civil law. On the contrary, every now and again one reads in the press that the board of an *Orthodox* congregation and an Orthodox rabbi or cantor have gone to the civil courts to settle conflicts arising out of contracts and breaches of mutual agreements.

In my article I was not accusing Orthodox Jews. I am even aware that, according to the dictum of the Amora Mar Samuel, the civil law of the country in which Jews live has a (religiously) binding character for Jews. I was merely concerned with the statement of a *fact* —to wit: the impact of the Emancipation on the scope of *viable* Jewish law. Nothing that Rabbi Wachtfogel says in his letter could in any way give the reader a picture of the latter-day state of affairs at all different from the one I tried to paint in my article.

## "Exodus"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In his review of *Exodus* (June), Joel Blocker, apparently specializing in appearing "clever," failed in or was incapable of understanding the real power of the book. *Exodus* caught the spirit of the Jewish people's determination to survive despite the greatest odds. Far from the characters being idealized, they were real in the truest sense of the word. . . . The overwhelming success of *Exodus* is due to the fact that scores of thousands of "little" people recognized its truly great qualities.

MURRAY TATE

Toronto, Canada

## Correction

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I should like to correct an error that crept into my article in the March issue, "The Israeli Scene." Though Professor Nathan Rotenstreich has addressed the Mapai Young Guard at their invitation (the fact that misled me), he is not a leader of that Young Guard, nor does he identify himself with any other particular group. I'm sorry about this misleading slip.

MEIR MINDLIN

Jerusalem, Israel

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# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## THE SWAMP OF PROSPERITY*

### SAUL BELLOW

GOODBYE, COLUMBUS is a first book but it is not the book of a beginner. Unlike those of us who came howling into the world, blind and bare, Mr. Roth appears with nails, hair, and teeth, speaking coherently. At twenty-six he is skillful, witty, and energetic and performs like a virtuoso. His one fault, and I don't expect all the brethren to agree that it is a fault, is that he is so very sophisticated. Sometimes he twinkles too much. The New York *Times* has praised him for being "wry." One such word to the wise ought to be sufficient. Mr. Roth has a superior sense of humor (see his story "Epstein"), and I think he can count on it more safely than on his "wryness."

His subject, to narrow it down for descriptive purposes, is Jewish life in suburban New Jersey and New York, the comfortable, paradoxical life of the Jew in prosperous postwar America. Neil Klugman, the hero of the long title story, twenty-three years of age, is different in many ways from the heroes of Jewish stories of the 30's and 40's. His appetites are more boyish, his thoughts more shrewd. He is strong on observation, a little less strong on affection. His prototypes were far more sentimental. They were more doting, and also more combative. Neil is very little concerned with his parents, who have gone for the summer, or with his aunt who wants to fill him in their absence with pot roast and soda pop. He is something of an outsider; his fictional ancestor was a misfit, a sad sack, pure burlap, weirdly incompetent and extremely unworldly, as incoherent in the face of injustice as Billy Budd himself, a stranger to good manners, but for all of that easily moved, honest, and goodhearted. The burlap hero could never keep a job or hold a girl. He was always sure to be shortchanged on the bus and if he went into the Automat for a cup of coffee he would scald himself. On the Jewish side he was descended from the *shlimazl,* obviously; on the Russian, from the poor clerk of Gogol's story "The Cloak"; in American literature he takes his descent from the pure youth (relatively pure) of Anderson's "I'm a Fool"—"Gee whiz! How could I pull such a dumb trick!" The burlap has gone out of fashion now, and in the stories of Mr. Roth there are only patches of the grand old fabric. It was during the depression that burlap had its finest hour. Before our present prosperous and bureaucratic era began, poor Feigenbaum belonged to the Jewish *cafoni,* the Little People. Now our more selfish desires and more complex motives have received a sharp stimulus. Possessions have a new glamor. Even burlap has changed. Madison Avenue people tint it and hang their windows with it, so it must cost more. Probably nylon is no dearer. In any case, the hero of Jewish fiction two decades ago knew nothing of Jewish suburbs, country clubs, organized cancer fund drives, large sums of money, cars, mink, or jewelry. The burlap hero assumed that the social order was of course wicked, base, and harsh. But then the Mammon of Unrighteousness in those days had a smaller wardrobe. He might sometimes appear as Uncle Willie the haughty manufacturer from Riverside Drive, in spats, a cold Uppman cigar in his teeth. But now he wears Ivy League clothes, his hair is cut tight to his head, and his name is Legion. The stories of Mr. Roth show the great increase of the power of materialism over us. (I beg leave to remind you that I am neither Karl Marx nor the editorial writer for *Life.*) I don't want to suggest that Mr. Roth simply exchanges the burlap for the nylon,

*A review of *Goodbye, Columbus,* by Philip Roth, Houghton Mifflin, 298 pp., $3.75.



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the rugged for the smooth, naivety for sophistication; only that he has a greater interest in society and in manners and is aware of a great change in the condition of the Jews.

It is entirely clear that he is not satisfied with what Jewish life in the United States has become and though his criticism is usually made laughingly there are moments when it isn't possible to laugh. A story like "Defender of the Faith" with its portrait of the scheming Private Grossbart dries up the grin on the reader's face, and "Goodbye, Columbus," pleasant and witty as it is, reveals something that is far worse than the corruption of an individual—the vacuity and mindlessness of Pig Heaven. There exist Jewish writers who think that ours are the best of all possible suburbs in the best of all possible Americas. In the final pages of *Marjorie Morningstar,* Mamaroneck is glorified. There we are shown a pious and wiser Marjorie, purified of her earlier follies. But to Mr. Roth all is far from well in Mamaroneck. He seems to doubt that the highest prizes of existence have really been moved from the ascetic foundation on which they have always before rested onto the new foundations of money and "normalcy." I think that we must, on the evidence, doubt along with him.

THE condition revealed in "Goodbye, Columbus" is really too grave for irony, and that is why Mr. Roth's "wryness" appears to me inadequate. There's a lot of mileage to be gotten out of kidding costly Jewish weddings, plastic surgery, and similar nonsense, but Mr. Roth wants to go deeper, farther, and the wryness after some time becomes the expression of his discontent with the inadequacy of his method. For, to put it as simply as I can, Mr. Roth wants to make a contrast of spirit and worldly goods.

Neil Klugman and Brenda Patimkin, who are having a love affair during the summer vacation, come down to New York together, she to shop for clothes and to obtain a diaphragm, he to give her his support on such a difficult occasion. "The doctor's office," he says, "was in the Squibb Building, which is across from Bergdorf Goodman's and so was a perfect place for Brenda to add to her wardrobe." While she is being fitted, Neil wanders into St. Patrick's and there he makes a little speech to himself. "Can I call the self-conscious words I spoke prayer? At any rate, I called my audience God. God, I said, I am twenty-three years old. I want to make the best of things. Now the doctor is about to wed Brenda to me, and I am not entirely certain that this is for the best. What is it I love, Lord? Why have I chosen? Who is Brenda? . . . If we meet you at all, God, it's that we're carnal and acquisitive, and thereby partake of you. I am carnal and I know you approve. I just know it. But how carnal can I get? I am acquisitive. Where do I turn now in my acquisitiveness? Where do we meet? Which prize is you?

"It was an ingenious meditation, and suddenly I felt ashamed. I got up and walked out, and the noise of Fifth Avenue met me with an answer:

"Which prize do you think, *shmuck*? Gold dinnerware, sporting-goods-trees, nectarines, garbage disposals, Patimkin Sink, Bonwit Teller—."

Brenda's father is the manufacturer of Patimkin Sinks. A good enough old fellow at home, kindly and hospitable in an empty sort of way, he is formidable at business. He will buy split-level houses and new cars for his children when they marry but he will require Neil, should he become his daughter's suitor, to give up his silly job at the Public Library where he has no prospects and to become capable of giving her garbage disposals and gold dinnerware.

Certainly Neil's meditation is curious. When I had finished the story I went back and read it again. It seems a little too cozy on the third reading. Why should it please God that we are carnal or acquisitive? I don't see that at all. I assume Mr. Roth is saying that it would be a deadly offense to confuse God with Bonwit Teller and garbage disposals, with goods and money. He doesn't say it well; he is confused, nervous, wry, and somewhat too aware that this is a shocking way to address God. And in St. Patrick's, too, perhaps displeasing the Catholics as well as the Jews. Had Mr. Roth plainly said "worldly goods versus the goods of the spirit" he might have avoided all this wry awkwardness. But now we have grasped his meaning: the world is too much with us, and there has never been so much world. For, in the past, what could money buy that can compare with the houses, the sinks, the garbage disposals, the Jags, the minks, the plastic surgery enjoyed by the descendants of those immigrants who passed through Ellis Island? To what can we compare this change? Nothing

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like it has ever hit the world; nothing in history has so quickly and radically transformed any group of Jews. It is this change which is the real subject of "Goodbye, Columbus," and not the love affair. Love, duty, principle, thought, significance, everything is being sucked into a fatty and nerveless state of "wellbeing." My mother used to say of people who had had a lucky break, in the old Yiddish metaphor, "They've fallen into the *shmaltz-grub*"—a pit of fat. The pit has expanded now into a swamp, and the lucky ones may be those who haven't yet tasted the fruits of prosperity.

The matter becomes even plainer in "Eli, the Fanatic."* Into the suburban community of Woodenton comes a school for Orthodox children, refugees; the strange figure of a European Jew in black garments is seen in the supermarket and the Jewish residents are alarmed and angry. Eli Peck, the lawyer, writes to Mr. Tzuref at the school, "Woodenton is a progressive suburban community whose members, both Jewish and Gentile, are anxious that their families live in comfort and beauty and serenity." Eli's friend Teddie says to him about old-fashioned Orthodoxy, "It's a goddam hideaway for people who can't face life, if you ask me. . . . There's peace in this town, Eli—and a good healthy relationship between its modern Jews and Protestants. . . . Last week, Jimmy Knudson took a group from Kiwanis to the Unitarian Church, and I sat there, Eli, and I was impressed. Nobody wailing or crying or any of that stuff. . . . And the priest, Eli, was dressed like you and me, Eli, and in his sermon he quoted from the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine, for Christ sake." So, in rhythms that come straight from the Yiddish, Teddie states his case. Peace. Good healthy relationship. Nullity. Eli sends his own best tweed suit to the European Jew in black, and then, finding the old garments at his door, puts them on and frightens everyone. The little story is touching and funny, and it tells a great deal about the situation of the Jews in the Mamaronecks and Woodentons of this country.

Not all Jewish readers have shown themselves pleased with Mr. Roth's stories. Here and there one meets people who feel that the business of a Jewish writer in America is to write public relations releases, to publicize everything that is nice in the Jewish community and to suppress the rest, loyally. This is not at all the business of Jewish writers or of writers of any kind, and those touchy persons who reproach us with not writing the Jewish Elsie Dinsmore over and over again are very like the Russian authorities who created socialist realism. No quantity of Jewish Elsie Dinsmores from Mamaroneck will decrease anti-Semitic feeling. The loss to our sense of reality is not worth the gain (if there is one) in public relations. This is precisely what Mr. Roth is telling us in "Eli, the Fanatic." What plagues Eli is the false image which fear and a hateful spirit of accommodation have created. The tweed suit is no more his than the black garments. He is false to himself in both, and it is this falsehood that does him the greatest harm.

My advice to Mr. Roth is to ignore all objections and to continue on his present course.

*Published in COMMENTARY, April 1959.—ED.

## Anti-Semitism & the New Testament

ANCIENT JUDAISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT. By FREDERICK C. GRANT. Macmillan. 155 pp. $3.50.

*Reviewed by* MOSES HADAS

FOR promoting understanding between Jews and Christians Professor Grant's little book is more effective than a thousand interfaith dinners. In learning and clarity and conviction it cannot be matched by all the tracts issued by Jewish organizations to explain Judaism to perplexed Jews or those issued by Christian organizations to promote tolerance. All the admonitions addressed to rabbis at their ordination cannot point to the true function of the rabbi more decisively and succinctly. No Jew of comparable stature could lay his finger upon the very roots of anti-Semitism so unerringly, so unequivocally, and so outspokenly.

No Jew could, aside from the reticence imposed by courtesy, because however tenacious of his own values he may be he must unconsciously share the general outlook of his environment. Against direct attack he can hold his own if he is well informed; but when it is not the attack itself—which may have been forgotten or even consciously rejected—but its sequelae which have permeated the culture, then the Jew is no better armed than others who share it. The very vogue of the word "tolerance" is an index of an unspoken premise

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that what we are urged to put up with is in fact disagreeable. To understand that what is involved is right, not sufferance, it is necessary to probe into the root of the prejudice.

The root, it is important to realize, is religion, and however remote from religion the manifestations of anti-Semitism may be, it is from religion that they ultimately derive, and they cannot be understood or dealt with without reference to the root. The root of anti-Semitism, modern as well as ancient, is in the New Testament, and it is there because, as Professor Grant writes, "It seems to be a natural tendency of theologians and controversialists, in all religions or religious movements which have separated from an older faith, to attribute malice, bigotry, stupidity, even hypocrisy to the adherents of the abandoned creed."

Actually the substratum (not merely an "element") of the New Testament is Pharisaism. Despite the pejorative connotations of the word in the New Testament and in the usage of all European languages, Pharisaism embodies as pure and lofty a religious ideal as men have known. This is no news to good scholars, Christian as well as Jewish; George Foot Moore's monumental *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* has provided complete demonstration. But where Moore wrote as an objective scholar, Professor Grant writes as a religious man burdened with a sense of guilt for the enormities anti-Semitism has perpetrated during its long history.

PHARISAISM, according to Professor Grant and his kind, is the natural consequence of Old Testament prophecy. According to the more widely held view, it was an aberration; the natural successor to Old Testament prophecy was apocalyptic, which gave rise to Christianity. Professor Grant's analysis of Messianic hopes and writings is just—so just as to make a rationalist squirm; but he points out that Messianic interests (there was never a definite dogma) were vague and unsystematic and ephemeral and, what is conclusive, that they were soon decisively rejected by the main stream of Judaism. Indeed the main stream of Christianity itself was not apocalyptic but Pharisaic.

Hostility generated by rivalry when the issue was doubtful persisted after there was no longer doubt, and, what is more important for the modern world, this hostility was exacerbated, not mollified, by the Reformation. "This terrible inheritance of hatred and bigotry," Professor Grant writes, "the early church passed on to the medieval, and the medieval to the Reformation and post-Reformation churches." From this accumulation of prejudice and fanaticism the Reformation might have been expected to set European society free. But not so. The theological basis of the Reformation was Paulinism, chiefly as understood by Luther and Calvin, not the teaching of the Gospels, which were demonstrably Jewish in tone and outlook as well as in language and presuppositions. The result was a total identification of Judaism with "self-righteousness," reliance for salvation on "works of the Law," and "confidence in the flesh . . . Basically the Protestant dogmas were anti-Jewish, and Luther's own personal influence was anti-Jewish." From these premises Professor Grant deduces racism and the other unlovely consequences of German anti-Semitism.

It is the propagation of prejudice through preaching and teaching which most concerns Professor Grant. "It is still common among half-educated and misinformed preachers and writers to represent Judaism in the time of Christ as a decadent and moribund, sterile, mechanical, purely formal and hypocritical religion." If it is superficial knowledge which is the source of prejudice then the only cure is deeper knowledge. Professor Grant (who has known several seminaries at first hand) is distressed at the shallowness and glibness and the vagaries of much theological training; in consequence clergymen are unable and disinclined to study their central documents in the original tongues and depend on interpreters who substitute modern irrelevancies for their true business.

Modernists may smile at the naivety of a clerical professor who would introduce social as well as religious reforms by closer application to Hebrew and Greek, but other inveterate evils have been abolished by intellectual effort, and over a long stretch the evil of anti-Semitism may be also. In any case, it has worked so well in Professor Grant's case that he deplores missionary efforts to convert Jews to Christianity or Christians to Judaism—"though I would gladly see far more men and women converted to the imperishable heart of the Jewish faith." If his little book does nothing else it provides a tonic for apologetic Jews, and enables them also to see what Christianity stripped of incrustations is like in the eyes of a sensitive and honest Christian scholar.

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## How de Gaulle Came to Power

LES 13 COMPLOTS DU 13 MAI. By MERRY and SERGE BROMBERGER. Fayard (Paris). 439 pp. $4.60.

*Reviewed by* RAY ALAN

THE Bromberger brothers' approach to anyone in power is cloyingly sycophantic; and they value their contacts too highly to venture more than a toe or two beyond the orthodoxy of the Defense Ministry and Jacques Soustelle. Occasionally, by a wry tongue-in-cheek aside, they allow the reader to guess that they are not quite as politically naive as they seem; and once or twice they even refer to sedition, mutiny, and rabble-rousing as such. But their book is very much the Version according to Saint Jacques. The villainous diehards of the story are not the European *ultras* of Algeria, whose political myopia made the FLN uprising possible and then brought France to the brink of civil war, but *"les ultras de la défense républicaine"* who wished to uphold republican legality.

A typical example of the brothers' propagandist commitment is their insistence, repeated three or four times, that Toulouse was ardent in its support of the May 13 riot, whereas it was in fact one of the towns most hostile to the Algiers hotheads. The clandestine Public Safety Committee set up by an eccentric professor and an abbé of the Institut Catholique was a laughing-stock; its bill-stickers ventured onto the streets only after midnight, accompanied by armed escorts (sometimes supplied by the army). With the approval of the mayor and prefect, however, republican defense committees of Socialists, Communists, Radicals, Protestants, and Spanish Republicans sprang up in every quarter; and if, on orders from Algiers, the army and gendarmerie had tried to repeat the Corsican coup in Toulouse, the town might well have become the *point de départ* of a new Popular Front.

Yet this is a revealing book—so revealing that the *Dépêche du Midi*, the only non-Communist daily in France to campaign against de Gaulle last fall, has recently serialized it. The bias and the sycophancy are too crude really to get in the way; and because of them the Brombergers' book is all the more valuable a guide to the political ethics of the founders of the Fifth Republic. It is also a convincing reminder that if the Gaullists had been content to await a spontaneous summons from the French people they would still be in the wilderness. General Paul Ely, chief of the French general staff, asked Charles de Gaulle soon after the collapse of the Fourth Republic: "When did you know that you would be returning to power?" De Gaulle replied: "I have always known!" But his faith in his indispensability was shared by only a small minority of his compatriots, and to engineer his return the activists among that minority were obliged to collaborate with the same kind of men—including some of the selfsame men—who had brought the Third Republic to its knees; they were obliged to subvert the armed forces and, in the last resort, threaten Parliament and the legitimate government of the country with a direct military assault. The Gaullists' task "seemed impossible and would have proved impossible," the Brombergers admit, *"sans un travail de sape"*—without a determined effort of subversion, sabotage, and demoralization.

The Brombergers describe this effort in terms of thirteen plots and subplots. Some were only three-men-and-a-dog enterprises, and de Gaulle was the intended beneficiary of only a minority of them. Some of the plotters were avowedly fascist, revered Mussolini, Franco, and Salazar, and despised the Gaullists as too heterogeneous and vague. But all drew sustenance from a broadly similar political hinterland—that ultra-nationalist, ultra-Catholic, képi-worshiping right which believes its values to be menaced somewhat distantly by Communism and more intimately by a vicious "Anglo-Saxon" hydra whose heads bear such labels as parliamentarism, freemasonry, "Judeocracy," Protestantism, and Darwinism. Even the Gaullists drew their main "mass" strength in the Paris region from the steel-helmeted CRS and police whose favorite slogans (shouted in a police demonstration outside Parliament a year ago) were *"Les députés à la Seine"* and *"Mort aux Juifs."*

There were seven main categories of conspirators: the Gaullists proper; the rabble-rousing lawyer Biaggi and his followers, who organized the famous Algiers tomato bombardment of February 6, 1956, which "forced Guy Mollet to abandon his policy"; the right-wing activists of Algiers, spearheaded by Lagaillarde's neo-fascist students, Martel's Catholic "secret army," and the Poujadists; the complex-ridden, Mao-reading parachutist officers of Algeria, tortuously evolving what some of them tentatively

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call a "national communist" ideology; the *Grand O* secret society, organized by Dr. Martin, founder of the prewar Cagoulards and one of the ideological architects of the Vichy régime; the Colonels' Club (*ya Gamal!*) of the *Ecole militaire* and their friends in the armed forces and police throughout the country; and a ragtag and bobtail of surplus generals (300 at the beginning of 1958), retired generals, and ex-servicemen's organizations. Some of these categories overlapped. The Gaullists attracted Biaggi to their service (though his followers remained ignorant of the link) and were well connected with the colonels and surplus generals. The *Grand O* possessed considerable influence in the army, got control of Martel's movement, and infected Massu and several other well-placed parachutist officers with its views on "counter-revolution" (without the officers knowing the source of their infection).

The more active Gaullists were working for a military coup in the early summer that would enable de Gaulle to step forward as the arbiter and guardian of national unity. In Algeria they were weak (Algeria's largely Pétainist Europeans had little taste for de Gaulle) and were obliged to conclude an alliance with the neofascist and Poujadist activists. The activists had no intention of bringing down the parliamentary "system" merely for the Gaullists' benefit and stormed the *Gouvernement général* building on May 13 without informing them. The Gaullists gained the initiative only after the activists' failure to bar Pierre Pflimlin from the premiership had provided an opening and the senior officers in Algiers had begun to fear for their careers.

The Brombergers present the Gaullists as a patriotic social and intellectual elite, touchingly devoted to their hero, single-minded and altruistic in his service. Their devotion would indeed have been touching had de Gaulle been no more than a run-of-the-mill retired officer, sportsman, or pop-singer, unafflicted with political ambition. But a great many readers of *Les 13 complots* will surely find it difficult to admire the intelligence or the patriotism of men prepared to gamble the unity, well-being, and prestige of their nation on a single dice-throw, on behalf of a leader of whose intentions they were totally ignorant. (They could not even plead that French history was lacking in warnings of the dangers of this sort of thing.)

Soustelle and the friends of the Algerian diehards suspected that de Gaulle might not wish to go as far as they in the establishment of a permanently settler-dominated *Algérie française*. Liberal Gaullists, perturbed occasionally by the alliances and commitments he appeared to be allowing men like Soustelle and Michel Debré to make in his name, half-feared that his approach to Algeria might be rather more hidebound than theirs. Neither clan had the common sense or the guts to ascertain just what Gaullist policy was on any major issue; instead, each made its own declarations and half-promises and sought to present the general with as many *faits accomplis* and expectant allies as possible. Today, in consequence, the men who brought de Gaulle to power are as disunited as a Radical congress; the Communists are stronger numerically than at any time since the Hungarian repression; a greater proportion of France's effective fighting forces than ever before (85 per cent) are bogged down by the Algerian imbroglio; and the democratic elements which must one day assure a smooth take-over from de Gaulle, if he is not to be succeeded by a military free-for-all, are deeply demoralized.

On a par with the Gaullists' political irresponsibility was their startling moral numbness. In a democracy, the only honorable course for an official in disagreement with government policy is, surely, resignation. But in France in the last year or two of the Fourth Republic, a great many Gaullist civil servants and high-ranking officers, who were pledged to serve the regime and had accepted responsible appointments under it, were devoting their most energetic efforts—and a good deal of the taxpayers' money—to wrecking it from within. Gaullist politicians either (like Jacques Chaban-Delmas) sought cabinet rank for the same purpose or (like Soustelle) overthrew governments and created and prolonged political crises in order to demonstrate the instability of the regime.

The Brombergers describe these Gaullist tactics with admiration and enthusiasm, though they appear to disapprove of those of an ally of the men of May 13, the *Organisation de Renaissance de l'Algérie française*, which committed FLN-type outrages (e.g. the placing of time bombs in Algiers churches) so as to whip up European hysteria and win support for its demands for massive repression of the Moslems. One wonders why. Deliberately to set oneself the aim of sapping the confidence of the French people in their democratic institutions was, if

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anything, even more reprehensible than cultivating communal hatred in Algiers: the scars made by M. Soustelle and his friends on the French body politic will remain long after ORAF has been forgotten.

The Brombergers try hard to put General de Gaulle himself beyond suspicion, and he undoubtedly took greater pains than his followers to keep within the bounds of legality and propriety. But can one say more than that? He was all things to all men. A typical day's work was that of March 27, 1958, when "he welcomed successively Roger Stephane of *France-Observateur* and the action committee of a Soustellist ex-servicemen's organization. Stephane left persuaded that de Gaulle would grant independence to Algeria, the ex-servicemen convinced that he would fight to keep Algeria French." De Gaulle disapproved, though not too strongly, of Soustelle's Algerian policy, but refrained from telling Soustelle so to his face and contentedly allowed Soustelle to recruit support for Gaullism on the strength of this policy, left him a free hand to discredit the Fourth Republic in the name of Gaullism, and rode to power in his wake.

The conspirators who gave de Gaulle his opportunity "acted in his name," the Brombergers say, "without his having any say in what they did." Technically, this may be true, but it is equally true that he was fully informed of what they were doing and, when they were threatening Pflimlin with a military occupation of Paris, of what they were planning to do. De Gaulle "is in close touch with Algiers and is fully informed as to what is being prepared," his principal private secretary informed an envoy of General Miquel, whom General Salan had appointed to command the "March on Paris." When the Algiers coup was petering out, de Gaulle's declaration of May 15 gave its leaders fresh hope, and a breathing-space in which to carry out the admonitory Corsican *putsch* and organize a repeat performance for Paris. Only two days before the date fixed for the "March on Paris" (March 30), instead of telling General Miquel to respect his loyalty oath to the Republic, whereupon the worried Miquel would gladly have called the whole thing off, de Gaulle informed him of his intention of "taking the situation as [I] find it," and added complacently: "Let everyone accept his responsibilities!"

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While the leaders of the Algiers dissidence were wearing Premier Pflimlin down with threats of military action in France, de Gaulle was demanding *"la capitulation pure et simple du régime"* and the right to send parliament packing for two years. On March 28, issuing an undisguised ultimatum to the chairmen of both houses of parliament, whom President Coty was pressing to open negotiations with him, he threatened to return to his village and lay "the responsibility for the events which follow" on "those who were unwilling to hold talks" with him—not, of course, on the plotters and mutineers.

After a few more examples of this sort of thing, and after having insisted many times on de Gaulle's respect for "legality," even the Brombergers let slip the remark that "his conception of legality" was, admittedly, "some distance removed from that of the jurists of the National Assembly." And in another context, quite casually, they print a piece of news known to more than one resident foreign correspondent but unreported because—well, being expelled from a country in which you've been settled for some time, with most of your books and chattels, is always a messy, costly business: the news that the *"chef d'orchestre* with the invisible baton" who coordinated the various civil and military plots which brought the general back to power was none other than Olivier Guichard, the head of de Gaulle's personal secretariat. Guichard devoted six days a week to this duty, the Brombergers say. Surprisingly, they have omitted to add that de Gaulle had, of course, no idea of how his *chef de cabinet* filled in his time.

## Jewish History in Pictures

THE JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES: A PICTORIAL HISTORY—1654 TO THE PRESENT. By MORRIS U. SCHAPPES. Citadel Press. 319 pp. $7.50.

*Reviewed by* MILTON HINDUS

TWENTY-FIVE years ago and more, Morris Schappes was contributing keen literary criticism to James Burnham's old quarterly the *Symposium* and teaching English at New York's City College. He impressed his classes by his logical grasp and by his conscientious attention to detail. He seemed to be beginning a promising academic career.

In the New York state legislative investigations of the colleges in 1940-41, however, Schappes was named as a Communist. His testimony before the committee led to his trial for perjury, and in June 1941 he was convicted and sent to prison. Schappes admitted that he had been a member of the Communist party until 1939, but insisted that he had resigned in that year. Nevertheless, his published *Letters from the Tombs* revealed him to be an orthodox Stalinist still, whatever the state of his party membership may have been.

Since his imprisonment, Schappes's career has entered a second phase—as a student of American Jewish history. In 1947, he edited selections from the poetry and prose of Emma Lazarus. In 1950, he put together an ambitious *Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875*. The discipline imposed by the documents, and the fact that the history stopped at 1875, did not remove the book from the area of controversy, and careful reviewers like Harold Ribalow in the *Saturday Review* and Frank Rosenthal in the *American Historical Review* discerned evidence of its author's bias. Nevertheless, as the dust jacket of this book indicates, Schappes's scholarship won commendation in some Jewish quarters.

The present book is not likely to fare as well. Schappes is distinctly less happy as a writer of history than as a gatherer of historical documents. Nor does he gain anything from adding the last eighty years to the area of his consideration. The description of comparatively recent events demands qualities of objectivity which he lacks.

It is an attractive book on the surface, spacious in format and well printed and bound. Its defects are revealed only upon patient examination. The author tells us that he intends his book for the general reader rather than the scholar, but the inevitable mentions of Benny Leonard, Battling Levinsky, and Al Jolson seem to be almost afterthoughts, unassimilable to his more serious intentions. The pictures, which seem so interesting at first glance, prove to be a mixed lot. One is glad to find a photograph of Sholem Aleichem's phenomenal funeral procession in 1916, or of the scene of the Triangle Factory fire in 1911, or a reproduction of Jacob Epstein's Daumier-inspired 1901 drawing "At the Yiddish Theater"; but when in the space of three consecutive pages one is confronted with portraits of Moissaye J. Olgin of the *Freiheit*, Michael Gold, and Isidor Schneider,

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one wonders if the presentation is well balanced. Then one finds that Isaac Bashevis Singer, by common consent one of the most important contemporary Yiddish writers, is not even mentioned, while a dozen of his literary inferiors are named and pictured. Howard Fast's novels are described as "excellent and ever more penetrating."

The praise of Fast, despite his defection from the Communist party, would seem to indicate that Mr. Schappes himself is changing his political views. There are a number of such indications. The Communists in the labor movement in the 20's, Schappes says, were characterized by "general sectarianism and revolutionary romanticism. They failed to study the specific political and industrial conditions in the United States. They disregarded major objective differences between American industrial and class relations and the situation in Russia. . . ." Schappes also criticizes the reaction of "the Jewish left" to the Hitler-Stalin Pact, and he makes some revealing comments on Russia's crackdown on Yiddish culture in 1948-49 and the dissimulation which followed: "By 1950, a cloud of confusion, doubt, fear, bitterness, disbelief, dismay, and furtive worry . . . settled upon the scene. This cloud was not to be dispelled until the blasting revelations of the grim truth of the unjust imprisonment and even in many cases of the execution of these Soviet Yiddish writers began to appear in 1956."

On the other hand, some of his old antipathies remain. President Truman's immediate recognition of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948 is played down ("acknowledging an accomplished fact when he saw one"), while the real credit, according to Mr. Schappes, goes to Russia ("the first big power" to extend *de jure* recognition). "The policy of the Soviet Union," we are told, "was forthright." Truman's administration was responsible for "the postwar chill, which . . . replaced the combat warmth of the Rooseveltian Grand Alliance with the Soviet Union. . . . The Truman Doctrine was proclaimed on March 12, 1947, pronouncing the regimes of Greece and Turkey, widely known for their terrorism, to be outposts of American democracy. . . . And, significantly, some Zionist leaders here and in Palestine, eager for support from the United States, promptly offered the services and lives of the Jews of Palestine in the cause of the Truman Doctrine." In analyzing statistically the fund-raising campaign of the United Jewish Appeal in 1946, Schappes comments: "Only four out of a thousand donors gave $5,000 or more, but these big contributions made up more than 30.8 per cent of the $103,000,000. Of course these big donors influenced the policy governing the distribution of these vast funds, and some criticism developed when this policy became tinged with Cold War aims."

It is interesting, too, to follow the fortunes of the *Jewish Daily Forward* in the course of these pages. From its inception in 1897, we are told, "the *Forward* developed its own characteristic weakness: in tight situations, it would opportunistically and timidly hold the workers back from the sharpest struggles, demobilize them, and disillusion them. From the beginning the *Forward* was a mixed blessing." In 1898, by taking a stand in support of the Spanish-American War, "the *Forward* began a practice, in critical situations, of subordinating the national interest of the American people and workers as well as the interests of the Jewish masses to the class needs of the imperialists." In the time of Hitler, "The *Jewish Daily Forward,* its vision distorted by bitter anti-Communism, carried a Berlin report by Jacob Lestchinsky, published February 16, 1933, that Goebbels had ordered an end to pogroms and that Hitlerism, now that it was in power, would 'have to become well-behaved.' "

But if the *Forward* and Mr. Lestchinsky were victimized by their humanitarian hopes in this instance, other historians might have found examples of many Communist false political appraisals during the Hitler period which were far more sinister. Mr. Schappes has not. Anyone who can write, more than forty years after the event, that the effect of the Bolshevik coup in 1917 was to replace "the rule of landlords and capitalists" with "the rule of workers and peasants" is obviously still in the grip of some powerful prepossessions.

The author's bias—it is what he elsewhere calls that of a "historical materialist"—is evident even in his discussions of the earlier history. He speaks, for instance, of "the Federalist cold war against France" which followed in the wake of the Reign of Terror. The Mexican War provides him the text for a short sermon: "In this first war of aggression by the United States against a foreign country, Jews among other Americans drew a distinction between two kinds of patriotism: that which in-

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volves blind loyalty to an administration, no matter how reactionary its policy, and that which involves enlightened loyalty to the basic democratic ideals of the American people in which love of country is fused with devotion to justice."

But the only literary evidence Mr. Schappes can muster about the division of Jewish opinion on that war is a personal letter by Rebecca Gratz; the public pronouncement of Isaac Mayer Wise, hailing the heroism of Zachary Taylor, he dismisses as rather fawning. He tells us that Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Webster, and Lincoln opposed the war. But he does not indicate that Whitman enthusiastically supported it as editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, nor that, as Allen's recent life of Whitman puts it, "most Americans, outside of New England, were convinced that the Texas problem could only be solved by military force." In other words, Reverend Wise was at least as representative as Rebecca Gratz.

In the later sections of the book, one discovers a disproportionate emphasis upon the labor movement and a consistent favoring of the "progressive" elements within it. The religious, cultural, and nationalist manifestations in Jewish history are not absent from the discussion—nor are they even consciously slighted—but they are seen dimly and from a distance, while unions, parties, and statistics emerge in intimate and enlarged detail. The over-all result is that, for large sections of the book, we seem to be reading a labor history rather than a Jewish history—and, indeed, a labor history of a very special kind.

## From Proletarianism to Nationalism

COMMUNISM IN INDIA. By GENE D. OVERSTREET and MARSHALL WINDMILLER. University of California Press. 603 pp. $10.00.

*Reviewed by* JOHN H. KAUTSKY

UNTIL the end of World War II, Indian Communists numbered hardly more than a handful. Their activities, in obscure, tiny, squabbling grouplets in Moscow, London, Berlin, Paris, and India itself, are described in fascinating detail in the early chapters of this definitive work by two American political scientists. The Communist party of India (CPI) had 150 members in 1934 and still only 5,000 in 1942, while the Indian National Congress had 500,000 members in 1936 and 5 million in 1939. Today, however, the CPI is reported to have nearly a quarter of a million members, and in the last general election (1957) it polled more than ten million votes.

Why this pre-war failure of the Communists, as against their success in recent years? Divided direction from abroad, personal jealousies among the leaders, British repression—all these things played a part; but they fall short of an adequate explanation. Nor will it do to say that the Indian Congress party was a uniquely powerful nationalist movement. Communists in other underdeveloped countries fared no better than the CPI. In the final analysis, Communism failed in underdeveloped areas between the wars because it appeared irrelevant to the interests of any significant group, and particularly to their intense nationalism. The recent striking gains of Communism in underdeveloped countries result not only from the vast changes in these countries since World War II, but also from significant changes in the politics of Communism itself.

Non-Leninist Marxists and the people of underdeveloped areas have largely been strangers to each other. A doctrine predicting the victory of the proletariat over capitalism in highly industrialized countries could find little echo in pre-industrial societies where there was no proletariat to speak of. On the other hand, in the half-century after Marx's death, Social Democrats saw little reason to look beyond the industrialized countries of Europe, where labor was generally gaining strength and influence.

Lenin, however, was in a different position. Where Social Democrats in Western Europe could believe that the growth of the working class would inevitably bring it to power, Lenin sought in Marxism a rationale for a "socialist" revolution to be undertaken largely by intellectuals before capitalism had matured in Russia. Thus, he introduced drastic modifications into the original Marxist theories. He claimed, for example, that the workers on their own were incapable of understanding their stake in the socialist revolution, and that genuine proletarian class-consciousness was possessed only by an intellectual elite, i.e. the Communist party. Logically, then, any revolution led by such an elite becomes a proletarian revolution, even though the actual working class

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does not support it—or does not even exist. Lenin himself, nevertheless, continued to insist on the Communist party's maintaining a foothold in the working class.

At the same time, Lenin modified Marxism by introducing the idea of the "bourgeoisification" of labor in the West as a result of imperialism. Many Western workers, the so-called "labor aristocracy," he said, shared in the profits derived from the exploitation of colonies; and because of this they were coming to defend capitalism and adopt attitudes of "social chauvinism." On this view, all of society in imperialist countries, the workers included, become exploiters, while all the peoples of the colonies, including their favored few, are exploited proletarians. The class struggle ceases within each society but reappears as the colonies' fight for national liberation; the proletarian revolution becomes a nationalist revolution. Again, though Lenin favored supporting anti-Western nationalist movements in the colonies, he stopped short of accepting the ultimate implications of his doctrine.

For three decades after the Russian Revolution, the Communists were handicapped by Lenin's inability to make a complete break with Marxism. They were the first intellectual-led movement in an underdeveloped country to achieve rapid industrialization without Western capital. Yet their appeal to the intellectual-led nationalist movements of other such countries failed because their mistaken claim to be the vanguard of an industrial proletariat (and hence an example to the West) obscured the relevance of their real achievement.

Only after World War II did the Communists finally free themselves from their proletarian myth. Since 1947, they have increasingly been proclaiming themselves champions not only of the native working class, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie, but also of the bourgeoisie and, indeed, of all classes opposed to "foreign imperialism" (i.e., the United States). To be sure, Communists still retain much of their "proletarian" imagery; but as "the people" come to replace "the working class," Communists become ideologically indistinguishable from other nationalists.

At this point, convenience dictates whether Moscow should support a nationalist movement organized by Communist bourgeois intellectuals or one led by other bourgeois intellectuals. Where the non-Communist movement is anti-Soviet, Moscow has no choice, of course; it must cooperate with those who still call themselves "Communists." But where a non-Communist movement is actually or potentially pro-Soviet, Moscow may well by-pass the Communist nationalists in favor of a more powerful ally. Khrushchev's defense of Arab Communists against Nasser's attacks and his letter to Nasser confirming the latter's right to suppress the Syrian Communists, illustrate both alternatives. The choice between them seems a matter of power politics rather than of ideology.

THE first part of *Communism in India,* comprising nearly two-thirds of the book, is a historical analysis of the strategy of the CPI as it evolved from 1920 to 1958 in response, primarily, to Soviet foreign policy needs and, secondarily, to the Indian political environment. The remainder concentrates on aspects of party policy and practice, mainly in recent years: its structure and functions, mass organizations and fronts, propaganda and parliamentary activity, its reactions to the nationality problem and to the challenge of Gandhi. The book owes its great value and authority to its wealth of solid documentation from both Indian and foreign (chiefly Soviet) Communist literature.

A great deal of writing on Communism suffers from the indiscriminate use of such terms as *rightist* and *leftist, revolutionary, militant,* radical, and moderate. Even seemingly sophisticated references to the Communists' united-front policy often turn out to be meaningless when one recognizes that Communists out of power always follow a united-front policy of one kind or another; the real question is which kind is involved.

Overstreet and Windmiller distinguish between Communist strategies on the basis of which classes in the community Communists prefer to win over as political allies and which to fight as enemies. They discern two alternative courses. Under the "left" strategy, the bourgeoisie is the main enemy, and the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie are called on to fight it under Communist party leadership. Under the "right" strategy, the main enemy is foreign imperialism; this strategy is not specifically anti-capitalist, and so can rely on a broader alliance of workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and bourgeoisie.

All this has nothing to do with Communist willingness to resort to violence, which may or may not be combined with either strategy.

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Similarly, the authors hold that it is a matter of tactics whether the Communists decide on a "united front from above," i.e. an agreement to cooperate with the leaders of other parties, or "a united front from below," i.e. an attempt to win over the members of these parties by direct appeals against their leaders.

Most of the history of Indian Communism can thus be analyzed to show how the CPI, taking its cue in each case from a similar shift in Moscow, adopted the "left" strategy in 1928, 1939, and 1948, and the "right" strategy in 1935 and again in 1940. But the severe conflicts which have divided the party over its policy toward Nehru in recent years cannot be adequately accounted for in these terms. The authors sometimes refer to the alternative policies of opposition to and cooperation with Nehru as, respectively, "leftist" and "rightist," but by their own criteria these are mere tactical differences within the "right" anti-imperialist strategy. The fact is that, for almost seven years now, no anti-bourgeois "leftist" policy has had a serious chance of being adopted by the CPI.

If the present intra-party conflicts are not to be obscured, it is useful to distinguish what is really a third course, a variant of the "right" strategy which has become *de rigeur* for Communist parties in the past decade. This third strategy seeks to unite all classes, including capitalists, against "American imperialism" *within* the Communist party rather than in a "popular front" alliance.

Thus, for the first time, Communist parties claim to represent the interests of all classes. In the past, even when they cooperated with bourgeois parties against a common enemy like fascism or imperialism, they always did so only as the representatives of the proletariat. This new strategy, therefore, involves a profound change, part of the broader evolution of Communism from proletarianism to nationalism.

How has this new strategy fared in India? In the first Indian general election in winter 1951-52, the CPI and its allies polled 4,712,000 votes. To be sure, that was only 4.45 per cent of the total vote cast for Parliament, as compared to the 45 per cent gained by the Congress party. Yet, the twenty-three seats the CPI won in the national legislature (as against 364 for the Congress) made it the largest opposition group in Parliament. The CPI won 5.25 per cent of the vote cast for state assemblies, but, since its vote was unevenly distributed, the election left the party with considerable strength in a few states.

In the 1957 general election, the Communists polled 10,754,000 votes—8.9 per cent of the total, and exactly double the share they had won five years earlier. They gained only four additional seats in the national legislature, but at the state level they now showed some strength throughout the country for the first time. The Communists' most dramatic victory in 1957 was their capture of 35 per cent of the vote and almost half of the seats in the newly formed South Indian state of Kerala, where, with the support of a few independents, they formed a government. As recently as May 1958, the Communists won a by-election in Kerala with 48.5 per cent of the vote against an alliance of the Congress, Socialists, and other groups.

Since 1957, the CPI's membership is reported to have increased from 150,000 to 240,000. This is still minuscule in a nation of 390 million, but quite an increase from the postwar low of 20,000 in 1950. In the trade union field, where membership figures are notoriously unreliable, Overstreet and Windmiller note that the Communist-controlled All-India Trade Union Congress passed the membership of the Socialist-led unions by 1957 and now claims to have overtaken the Congress-led unions in strength. This would make the Communist AITUC the largest labor federation in the country.

Clearly, then, the CPI's new strategy has been profitable. Its application is illustrated by the party's record in the government of Kerala. There the CPI has tried, above all, to play the part of a constitutional party with a moderate program indistinguishable from that of other state governments. It has sought the support of all classes against the Congress, including the bourgeoisie—and even went so far as to conclude an extremely liberal agreement with G. D. Birla, one of India's big industrialists. Throughout India, the party has attempted to capitalize on the difficulties of the Congress regime: the discontents engendered by widespread unemployment (including unemployment among intellectuals), by the government's slow approach to land reform, by conflicts over the formation of linguistic states, and by the Kashmir and Goa questions.

Nevertheless, in the past few years, the

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party has found itself in a quandary which it cannot resolve. While it benefits from its role of opposition to the Nehru government, its strength, like that of any Communist party, also depends on the support and prestige of the Soviet Union. But Moscow, for reasons of its own, has in recent years lent its support and prestige increasingly to the Nehru government. The goal of Soviet policy in the foreseeable future—and it is doubtful that anything beyond that is of much concern to it—is, after all, not the success of the ultimate Communist program for a new social order but the reduction of Western and especially American power. It follows that a neutralist government like Nehru's is more useful to current Soviet plans than a few temporary successes of Indian Communism.

The CPI has thus found itself compelled to give increasing support to Nehru's foreign policy. By 1954, Moscow began to hint that the Indian Communists might also back the government's domestic policy, particularly its program of industrialization. Nevertheless, it was not until its Palghat congress in April 1956 that the CPI acknowledged, rather equivocally, that some conditional support for Nehru's domestic policies was unavoidable. By that time, voices from Moscow were speaking of the Nehru government's "progressive" contribution toward "people's democracy" and even of its "socialism." Yet, even at its most recent congress at Amritsar in March-April 1958, the CPI gave its support only to those government measures which had received Soviet endorsement; it continued its opposition to other phases of government policy, and particularly to the Congress administrations in the Indian states where it could exploit local discontents.

Many of the party's recent gains probably stem from what opposition to the ruling Congress it still maintains. How, by way of contrast, the CPI may suffer from Soviet support for Nehru is shown by its defeat in the 1955 elections in Andhra. A principal campaign document used by the Congress was a *Pravda* editorial, just before the election, which praised Nehru's foreign and domestic policies.

Ever since 1951, this dilemma has been provoking continual intra-party crises. Even at its 1958 congress, the General Secretary reported that the "ideological homogeneity of the party is seriously weakened." Obviously, strong forces in the CPI insist on continued opposition to the Congress government. Yet, in view of the Soviet attitude, the party has had to go far in offering Nehru support. If it goes much farther, it will be forced to give up what is left of its opposition policy, which it can ill afford to do. The farther Nehru moves in a pro-Soviet direction and the more he is praised and supported by Moscow, the less of a role is left for the CPI to play in Indian politics. In short, the Indian Communists suffer from the very successes of Soviet foreign policy.

Overstreet and Windmiller quote a fascinating article from Moscow's *New Times* of July and August 1956 on "A Non-Capitalistic Path for Underdeveloped Countries." It implies that such countries, specifically India under Congress rule, can move toward "socialism" under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, and that the Communists should accept that leadership. The CPI's General Secretary, in an anguished reaction to this threat, insisted on the traditional Communist view that a transition to socialism could take place only under the leadership of the Communist party.

The new Soviet policy, or rather the new theory supporting the old practice of sacrificing

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Communist parties to the foreign-policy interests of the Kremlin (Lenin did not object when Kemal suppressed the Turkish Communists, and Stalin handed German Communists over to Hitler) may make no sense in Marxist terms. But if "socialism" means, in the last analysis, no more than a government dependent on the Soviet Union, the theory is quite logical. The conversion of Communist parties into non-proletarian nationalists competing with established nationalist movements, and then their subordination to these movements by Moscow, mark the emergence into the open of implications already present in Leninism and the final emancipation of Leninism from its Western and working-class origins in Marxism.

## Report from Pandemonium

THE CHARM OF POLITICS. By R. H. S. CROSSMAN. Harper. 256 pp. $4.00.

*Reviewed by* CHARLES CURRAN

WHEN Satan and his angels were expelled from heaven, they built a palace in space which they named Pandemonium; and there they met in conclave to decide "What do we do now?" Milton has reported the debate in detail: the clash between the bitter-ender who wanted a fight to a finish, the appeaser who urged surrender as the lesser evil, the peace-by-negotiation orator who argued that a show of resistance would produce better terms, and the middle-way advocate of a diversionary blow at Earth, their enemy's soft under-belly, in order to create a fifth column there. This debate was the beginning of politics, for Pandemonium was the mother of Parliaments, the mirror-image of every legislative assembly. Milton's reporting set a standard that nobody has bettered. He was able to portray Pandemonium, and to strip the flesh from the bones of its debaters, because he had sat there himself, as adviser to Cromwell. He had learned at firsthand how politicians feel, think, calculate, and behave. He demonstrated that, to write with authority about Pandemonium, you must be both actor and critic.

Mr. Richard Crossman has spent more than twenty years in our contemporary Pandemonium, and *The Charm of Politics* is the result. It is the product of participation, observation, and fascination. I shall not compare it with *Paradise Lost*. All the same, it exhibits more than one of the Miltonic attributes. Among them are the sharp eye for humbug, the refusal to be shocked by the seamy side of ambition—and, notably, the underlying awareness that political behavior must be appraised, ultimately, *sub specie aeternitatis*. Vulgar brawl though it often is, politics is about ends as well as means. Mr. Crossman's recognition of this fact lifts him far above the level of tattle and chatter.

His book is a gallery of annotated portraits. It contains politicians (among them Roosevelt, Churchill, Truman, Attlee, Eden, Bevin, R. A. Butler, Adenauer) and a mixed lot of other personalities (who include Professors Carr and Toynbee, Walter Lippmann, Franz Borkenau, Henry Luce, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Alger Hiss); plus some sketches on Hitlerism. All of them previously appeared in the London *New Statesman* except for "Hitler's Fool," an inspection of Putzi Hanfstaengl, which is reprinted from COMMENTARY (April 1958). They are shrewd, skillful, with a uniformly high gloss of sophistication. They are also revelatory—not so much for what they tell you about their subjects as for the light they throw on Mr. Crossman himself. This is why *The Charm of Politics* deserves scrutiny by students of Pandemonium on both sides of the Atlantic.

For Mr. Crossman is by far the most influential Socialist intellectual in Britain, perhaps in Europe. He exercises an authority over his country's Labor movement that stretches literally from top to bottom. Unlike every other such intellectual, from the Webbs and the Coles to Laski and Balogh, he speaks to the masses as well as the back rooms. He is Proteus as a one-man band. He sits on the Labor party Executive, where he is one of its chief policy-makers. He is an M.P., and an effective parliamentarian (neither Laski nor Cole ever reached the House of Commons, and Webb was a dismal failure there). He is the mentor of the Fabian egg-heads who read the *New Statesman*. He is also a regular columnist in the *Daily Mirror*, the London radical tabloid that is the most potent force in British mass journalism. (This journal is dedicated to a daily demonstration of the truth that there is a whole sex consisting entirely of women. But Mr. Crossman interrupts the process several times a week in order to warn its four and a half million readers about capitalist plots to deprive them of cheese, and also of cake.) Whatever decisions may come out of Britain's Pandemonium during the next few years, Mr. Crossman will have a great deal to do with them.

What does *The Charm of Politics* tell you

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about him? It shows him, first of all, as a man with no bump of reverence. In one essay after another, he discards the myths and legends of the British left. They crash like bottles in a shooting gallery at a fair ground. He has no time for the myth that full employment can be maintained only by nationalization; or for the myth that Ramsay MacDonald's Labor government of 1931 was torpedoed by a bankers' ramp. He points a scornful finger at the Marxists who used to demonstrate that Nazism was merely a smoke-screen for monopoly capitalism; and another finger at those muddled members of his own party who, in the face of Hitler, simultaneously rejected pacifism and conscription. It is a refreshing and impressive display of intellectual candor—all the more since it comes from a committed partisan. For Mr. Crossman is not satisfied to abandon those myths that have served their turn at the hustings; he tramples just as lustily on the working myths of today. Let me quote one conspicuous example of this.

Ever since Mr. Attlee, as the Socialist Prime Minister, flew to Washington during the Korean war, the British left has affirmed that this journey stopped MacArthur from using the atom bomb. Mr. Crossman examines Truman's account of the matter. This, he says, shows that "characteristically, Mr. Attlee seems to have been content to assure himself that the President was in control. Apparently, he never mentioned General MacArthur, and his only reference to the A-bomb was made in an aside when the conference was over, and the communiqué was actually being drafted."

Mr. Crossman goes on: "If this picture is correct, British Socialists should undertake some re-thinking. We have all made speeches about the British government's moral influence in Washington, and the restraint it exercised on America's wild men. In fact, these claims fail to do credit to the courage and will-power of Harry Truman. . . . The Labor government was so nervous of losing American support that it first conceded the American bomber bases in Norfolk without demanding any *quid pro quo,* and then reversed its publicly declared opposition to German rearmament as soon as Mr. Acheson insisted on it."

In the climate of British politics, for Mr. Crossman to write such a disclaimer is like Eisenhower rebuking Lincoln, or Senator Kennedy bringing up the Inquisition. Robbing his energumens of their belief in the Attlee flight is the equivalent of telling the Grand Mufti that the Prophet invented the story of the Hegira in order to conceal a night out in Mecca.

This ruthless readiness to reject myth-mongering emerges repeatedly in *The Charm of Politics.* But it is not the only aspect of Mr. Crossman to be illuminated. Another side is shown in his examination of Neville Chamberlain. Here he repudiates with impatient scorn the left legend of the Munich Prime Minister as a dull, stupid nonentity. He paints Chamberlain as "a man of first-rate intellectual capacity and mature political judgment" before damning him for "a blindness of which only a first-rate intellect is capable." This portrait exhibits Mr. Crossman's willingness to do justice to an oppo-

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nent, to make assessments at a low temperature.

He hardly ever loses this capacity for dispassionate scrutiny when he is looking at another politician. But with non-politicians it is sometimes a different matter. Take, for example, this onslaught on Mr. Lippmann: "For years Mr. Lippmann has been throwing the pearls of his expertise before the swine of a vast syndicated readership. Quite suddenly, his patience has snapped. In *The Public Philosophy,* he tells us that the decline of the West—which he dates from the first world war—has been due to the poisonous influence of a mass electorate on foreign policy." Mr. Crossman repudiates this heresy as angrily as if he were reading the *Daily Mirror* instead of writing for it: "My conclusion is that . . . whenever a British or American politician has had the courage to trust the people, he has not been disappointed. . . . It is the press lord, the lobbyist, the party boss, and the bureaucrat who are chiefly responsible for weak government and cowardly decisions." The divine right of Demos, the doctrine that he can do no wrong (even when he votes for Versailles, or in Wisconsin) could not be put more succinctly.

What is the composite picture of the author that emerges from *The Charm of Politics?* Every reader, of course, will paint it differently. To me, Mr. Crossman seems to display both the strength and the weakness of the intellectual in Pandemonium: the belief in reason, and the disbelief in anything else. He is a political agnostic, the Einstein of negativity. In almost every one of his portraits, the net effect is one of depreciation. Even when he expresses approval, it is in order to express disapproval of someone else. He appears to have neither comprehension nor sympathy for the nature of belief—that cortical convulsion that sets a man apart from the doubters. Confronted by it, he writes as if he were baffled. Thus, he describes without explaining such personalities as Adenauer, Whittaker Chambers, Borkenau, Wingate. The touch of conviction seems to paralyze him. In this nuclear century, which has seen the re-emergence of the zealot from the cellars and the footnotes into which he was thrust by the age of liberalism, Mr. Crossman's talents, glittering as they are, make him look rather like a cavalryman at Hiroshima.

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## Book Reviewers in This Issue

Saul Bellow is the author of *Henderson the Rain King* and *The Adventures of Augie March.* His story "Looking for Mr. Green" appeared in the March 1951 Commentary.

Moses Hadas, who contributed "The Blessedness of the Scholar" to our March number, is Jay Professor of Greek at Columbia University.

Ray Alan described recent French politics in two articles for Commentary: "The Fourth Republic Abdicates" (July 1958) and "Can de Gaulle Stop the Gaullists?" (January 1959).

Milton Hindus, the author of critical studies of Proust and Céline, is an associate professor of literature at Brandeis University.

John H. Kautsky, a new contributor, is a political scientist now working at the Harvard Russian Research Center. He is the author of *Moscow and the Communist Party of India.*

Charles Curran is a political columnist for the Conservative London *Evening News* who has written for *Encounter* and the *Spectator.* This is his first appearance in Commentary.

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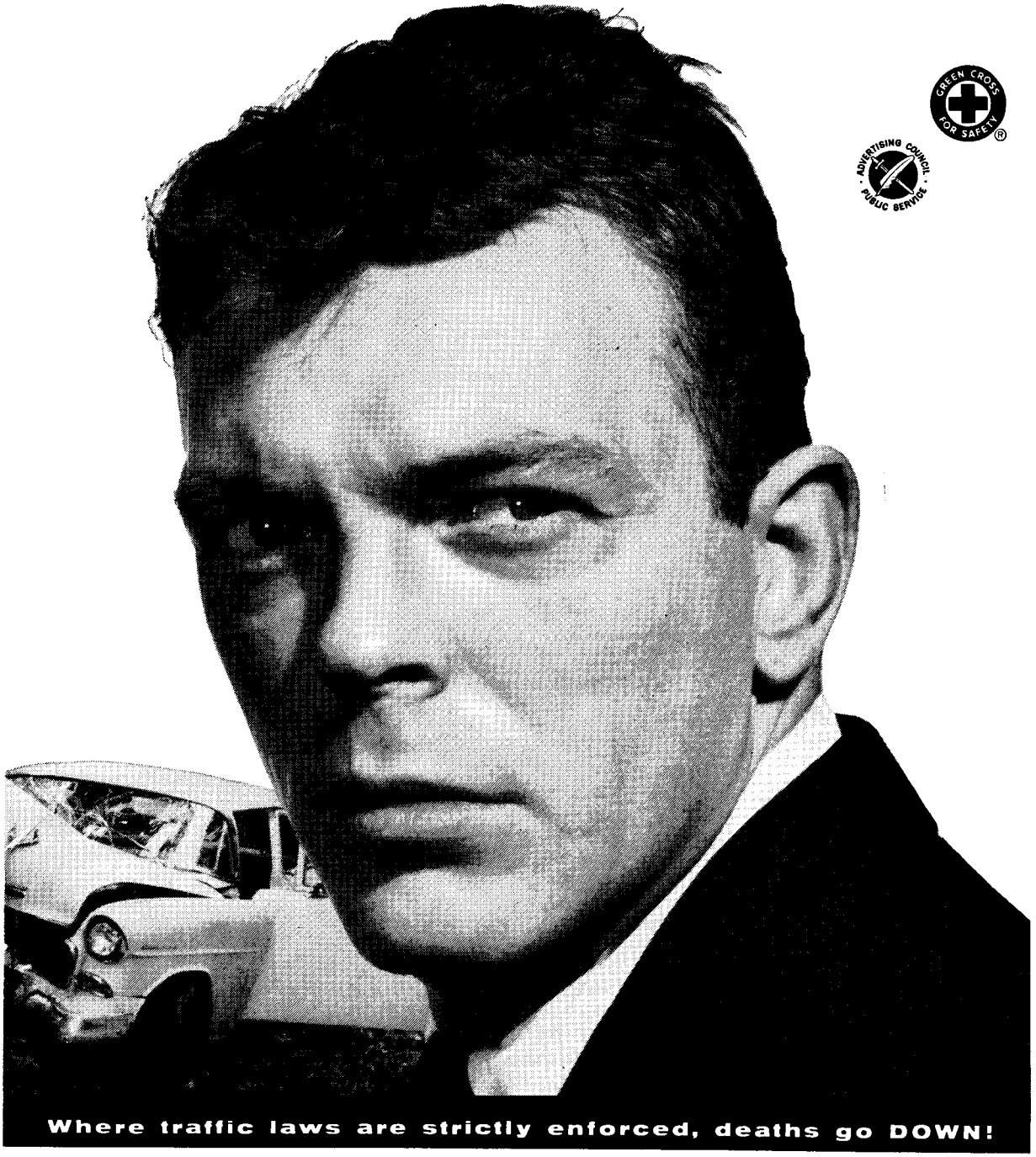


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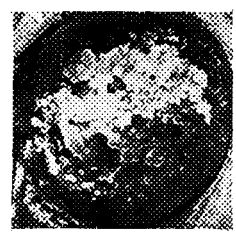

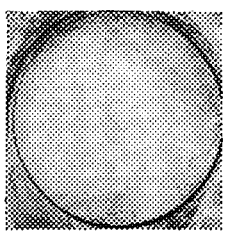

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